By the ABBÉ CONSTANT FOUARD

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SAINT JOHN AND THE CLOSE OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE

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SAINT JOHN

AND

THE CLOSE OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE

Nihil obstat.

J. BRUNEAU, S.S.

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L'ABBÉ CONSTANT FOUARD

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AND

THE CLOSE OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE

By THE ABBÉ CONSTANT FOUARD

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NOTE.

God has called away the distinguished Author of *The Christ, the Son of God* and *The Beginnings of the Church.* The Abbé Fouard is dead, on the eve of the appearance of his work on Saint John, wherein he sets forth the condition of the Church during the period in which the Apostle's writings first saw the light. In conformity with his intentions, we publish his manuscript, which will give his readers fresh cause to regret the premature end of a man whose works and whose life had but the single end in view of glorifying Jesus. God has paid the wage of this good workman in advance. To-day his eyes behold the divine countenance of the Christ, Whom he has depicted so lovingly and made to live again in so many hearts. After the example of Saint Thomas, when the Lord says to him, "Thou hast written well concerning me; what willst thou for thy reward?" doubtless his answer will be: "Naught save Thyself, O my God!"

From the Paris Edition, 1904.

INTRODUCTION.

Up to this stage in the series on "The Beginnings of the Church" I have confined myself to the purely historical narrative, not dwelling on controverted points. As was said in the very first lines of "The Christ the Son of God," "my only wish is to make the Saviour better known and loved."[1] With this end in view, the several studies of the Apostolic Missions followed in natural sequence. The work now before us, born of the same spirit, is intended to furnish the reader with a picture of religious conditions toward the close of the first century, at the period when the Fourth Gospel was composed by Saint John, who had outlived all his brethren in the Apostolate, and had attained a very advanced age. Men had even come to believe that death would spare that hallowed head, basing this opinion on a single saying of Jesus which seemed to imply that the dearly beloved disciple was to await the Master's coming here on earth. With charming candor the holy patriarch protested, The Lord did not say this: what He did say has no such meaning.[2] He was greatly exercised lest any one be misled; but who could doubt his word, since he alone was left of "those who had seen Jesus?"

This divine memory rested like an aureole over his snowy locks, and invested his person, not merely with a venerableness well-nigh universally acknowledged, but with an authority unquestioned in the Church. Accordingly his name, as formerly the names of the great Apostles Peter and Paul, would seem appropriate to represent the period wherein his closing years were spent, a period over which, by his deeds as well as by his writings, he exercised so profound an influence. Of the life of Saint John all we shall

[1] *The Christ, the Son of God*, vol. i., Preface.
[2] John xxi. 23.

see is his great work, or, rather, it is in this work that we shall study the man himself, for therein he has depicted his whole character, at once ardent and tender-hearted; like the eagle, fitted to soar to the loftiest peaks, whence with undazzled gaze his eyes could contemplate the blinding glare of the heavens; anon, descending from those heights, he wearies his disciples with his ceaseless exhortations "to love one another." Though like a veritable "son of the thunderbolt,"[1] he does, at times, fulminate against the unfaithful bishops;[2] yet how much oftener is he inspired by that love with whose perfume his heart was penetrated as he leaned upon the breast of Jesus!

Far more fitting would it be to devote all our attention to this winning aspect of his personality, if thereby we might but catch new glimpses of those heavenly features which had enravished his soul. But the never-ending attacks wherewith his works are assailed force us to forego this more agreeable plan and first seek a solid foundation for the objective matter of our present study: those inspired writings wherein he has revealed the Saviour to us in a new and striking light. Assuredly I have no intention of discussing such unsavory questions, much ventilated nowadays, as, for instance, "Whether Jesus Himself believed that He was God," or again, "Just when did He become aware of His Messianic Mission." Aside from the fact that the Mystery of the Incarnation must ever remain impenetrable to our puny intellects, inquiries so temerarious as these — not to term them assaults upon the divine personality of the Christ — would surely shock the pious instincts of my readers. This, however, is not the case with the proofs which go to establish the authenticity of the Apostolic documents. These we shall examine, beginning with those which have reference to the Fourth Gospel; then we shall pass on to the three Epistles of Saint John styled "catholic"; finally, we shall see what claims his Apocalypse has to be treated as equally authentic.

[1] Mark iii. 17.
[2] Apocal. Letter to the Seven Churches, i.–iii.

I.

The Apostle wrote his Gospel toward the end of the first century, or perhaps in the beginning of the second. Some years later, about the year 107, Saint Ignatius of Antioch would seem to have been acquainted with it and borrowed material from it.[1] At all events, there is no question that, at about the same date, the "Ancients" of Ephesus, who instructed Saint Irenæus, had in their possession this work of the Apostle and displayed it to their disciple.[2] Two of their contemporaries, Polycarp of Smyrna, and Papias of Hierapolis, have made use of his First Epistle.[3] Hence, in all likelihood, it would seem that the Fourth Gospel, so intimately connected with this letter as it is, must also have been known to them. Furthermore, Basilides, a Gnostic who taught at Alexandria about the year 120, refers, in his commentaries on the Gospel, to the work of Saint John.[4] It is true that nothing in these remote bits of testimony actually establishes the identity of the author. Nevertheless they are too important to be passed over in silence, since they attest the existence of the last Gospel in the first quarter of the century which followed its appearance, and show that it was held in such high esteem as to justify its rapid spread throughout Asia, along the Syrian coast, and even as far as Egypt.

[1] This is the opinion of Zahn (*Geschichte des neutestamentlichen Kanons*, ii. p. 903 *et seq.*), and of Resch (*Aussercanonische Paralleltexte zu Johannes*, pp. 11–12). However, one of the most learned commentators on S. Ignatius, Von der Golz, refuses to regard the alleged citations as being quotations from John (*Ignatius von Antiochien als Christ und Theologe, Texte und Untersuchungen*, xii. 3, 1891, pp. 118–144; 197–206). Harnack (*Chronologie der altchristlichen Litteratur*, i. p. 674, note 1) takes the same view.

[2] S. Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.* ii. 22, 5; v. 36, 2.

[3] S. Polycarp, *Ad. Philipp.*, 7. We learn from Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, iii. xxxix) that Papias had read the First Epistle of S. John, and had made use of it.

[4] *Philosophoumena*, vii. 22, 27.

After this date and during the course of the second century we find that his text is regarded everywhere as of equal rank and authority with those of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, with them making up a fourfold Gospel, unified and dominated by the self-same spirit.[1] In all the churches it is quoted: at Antioch, by Bishop Theophilus;[2] at Alexandria, by Clement;[3] at Athens, by Athenagoras;[4] in Gaul, in the letters addressed by the Churches of Lyons and Vienne to the fraternities of Asia Minor.[5] At Rome the evidences are abundant and especially explicit. Saint Justin, who embraced Christianity in Ephesus about the year 130, went from thence to teach at the capital of the Empire: he qoutes the Fourth Gospel.[6] In like manner does his disciple Tatian.[7] Valentinus, an Egyptian by birth, on coming to Rome in the time of Antoninus (138–161), makes use of John's work in his defence of Gnosticism[8] and attributes such overwhelming authority to it that his disciple Heracleon[9] uses this sacred book in preference to all others in his commentaries. So then, in the middle of the second century, both heretics as well as orthodox Christians of Rome agree in accepting our Fourth Gospel as an Apostolic document.

Twenty or thirty years later some unknown person in

[1] S. Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, iii. 11, 8.

[2] S. Theophilus, *Ad. Autolyc.*, ii. 22.—Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, iv. xxiv) fixes his episcopate between the years 169 and 177.

[3] Clement of Alexandria (about 190), quoted by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, vi. xiv).

[4] Athenagoras (177), *Legat. pro Christ.*, 10.

[5] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, v. 1, 15. This letter was written in 177–178.

[6] S. Justin (100–167), *Apol.*, i. 61; *Contra Tryph.*, 165.

[7] Tatian (110–172), *Orat.*, 13, 19, etc. His *Harmony* of the four Gospels, styled the Diatessaron, has not come down to us. To judge from the commentary S. Ephrem made upon it, it began with the "Prologue" from S. John. See *Evangelii concordantis expositio facta a S. Ephrem*, by J. B. Aucher; Mözinger edit. *Venetiæ*. Compare the Arabic *Diatessaron*, edited by Father Ciasca, Rome, 1888.

[8] S. Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, iii. 11, 15.

[9] Origen, *In Joan., passim.* The reader will find in S. Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, i. 8, 5, a curious commentary on the prologue of S. John made by another of Valentinus' disciples, named Ptolemy.

Rome drew up a list of our inspired writings. Note the terms in which he mentions the traditions he had gathered from those with whom he was living: "John, one of the disciples, composed the Fourth Gospel, at the solicitation of the other disciples and of his companions in the Episcopacy.

"'Fast with me for three days,' he said to them, 'and we will make known to one another whatsoever shall be revealed unto us.'

"That same night it was revealed unto Andrew, one of the Apostles, that John was to write the whole in his own name, under the supervision of the others. This, then, is why, although each of the Gospels begins its teachings after a different fashion, that fact in no wise affects the faith of believers, since it is the breath of one almighty and sole Spirit which proclaims everything that concerns the Birth, the Passion, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, His conversation with His disciples; His twofold coming: the first in lowliness and contempt, which has already taken place; the second in His royal and glorious power, which is to come. Why need we be surprised, therefore, when John, even in his Epistles, so strongly asserts each fact, since he could well say of himself, 'That which our eyes have seen, our ears have heard, our hands have handled, this is what we are writing for you.' Thereby he declares that he has been not an eye witness only, but a hearer as well, and the writer of all the marvellous deeds of the Lord whose history he has compiled."[1]

Many details in this largely legendary account must, of course, be rejected. One fact, however, does stand out strikingly and remains incontrovertible: namely, that in the latter half of the second century a Gospel by "John, one of the disciples" was known in Rome and considered

[1] *Muratorian Canon.* Muratori, a learned Italian ecclesiastic (1672–1750), discovered in 1740, in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, the manuscript known by his name, which once formed part of a Canon of the New Testament, written in Rome about the year 170. This celebrated fragment has furnished material for a goodly number of studies. See Vigouroux, *Manuel Biblique*, 1897, vol. i. p. 106.

authentic. It is true that in the text we have just read it is not distinctly asserted that this disciple John was the Apostle, the son of Zebedee; but a contemporary of this writer, Saint Irenæus of Lyons, makes this point clear. "John," he tells us, "the disciple of the Lord, he who lay upon His breast, likewise published a Gospel while he was dwelling in Asia."[1]

This testimony, however much the rationalistic critics may endeavor to lessen its weight, is and must remain of capital importance. No one, indeed, was in a better position to ascertain the origin of the last Gospel than this same Bishop of Lyons. Born in Asia, in the very locality where this book was composed, he had known Polycarp and those "Ancients" who had conversed with John.[2] During the persecution of 177 we find him in Gaul, and about the same date at Rome, whither he was bearing a letter from the Lyonese confessors to Pope Eleutherius. During his sojourn in the Holy City he might easily have corrected the Roman traditions by confronting them with those he had gathered in his native land. Evidently he noticed no points of divergence between them, for it was after his return that he composed his work *Against Heresies*, wherein, without any hesitancy, he attributes the authorship of the Fourth Gospel to John, son of Zebedee, whose head had rested on the Lord's bosom.

Nor was he ignorant, futhermore, that at that very date and for the first time, certain persons in lower Asia had seen fit to attack the authenticity of the divine book in question; but with very good reason he deemed their opinion worthless. Those that had mooted it were Phrygians of no repute, vaguely designated by the name of Alogi, who had been alarmed by the success attending the preaching of the Millenialists in their country. This was the epoch marked by the appearance of the heresiarch Montanus and his prophetesses, who went about announcing the speedy advent of the Paraclete who was to overthrow the work of

[1] S. Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, iii. 1, 1.
[2] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, v. 20, 5–7. — S. Irenæus, *op. cit.*, iii. 3, 4.

Jesus and inaugurate the thousand years' reign foretold in the Apocalypse, a reign of unparalleled glory and happiness for the elect. Listening to these Illuminati, as they based their chimerical beliefs on the Revelations and Gospel of Saint John, the group of Christians mentioned above could hit upon no better way to confute them than to cast doubt upon the authenticity of these same documents.[1] Simple and poorly educated folk, as were, indeed, the common run of the faithful in those distant provinces, they apparently were content with the narratives of the first three Evangelists, and were little likely to appreciate the more abstract teachings of the fourth. Comparing the latter with the popular form of the Synoptics,[2] and finding them outwardly so different, they might easily, and in perfectly good faith, distrust their origin, and feel it their duty to discredit them.

Unknown to fame, the supporters of this novelty made small headway and attracted less attention outside the Phrygian hamlets where their dogmas were in vogue, and the unanimous belief of their contemporaries on this subject seems not to have been shaken. Indeed in the neighboring, but much more educated, congregation of Hierapolis we find Apollinaris, its bishop, quoting as evangelical writings certain words of Saint John;[3] Theophilus does the same at Antioch.[4] Nor can any one retort that these pastors might have been unaware of the doubts raised by the nearby congregations as to the origin of the Johannine writings, for rumors of this action on their part had finally got abroad, doubtless because it was in opposition to all received ideas. In far away Gaul, Saint Irenæus makes some allusion to it; but solely to deplore and deride such fruitless attacks.[5] Rome, too, had gotten

[1] S. Epiphanius, *Hæres.*, li. — Philaster, *De Hæres.*, lx.

[2] It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that the reason why we designate the first three Evangelists by this name is because the plan common to them all can be taken in, as it were, at a glance.

[3] S. Apollinaris, *Fragmenta.* — Migne, *Patrol. Grec.*, vol. vi. p. 1297.

[4] S. Theophilus, *Ad. Autolyc.*, ii. 22. — Migne, Id. p. 1088.

[5] S. Irenæus, *Adv. Hæres.*, iii. 11.

wind of them; but there more attention was vouchsafed them, for this capital of the world had become the centre of Christianity; consequently the slightest attack on the integrity of the faith was sure to meet with a response there. Very likely, indeed, it was with a view of controverting the Alogi that the author of the Muratorian Canon goes so much in detail into the Apostolic origin of the Fourth Gospel. Furthermore, we know that their errors were discussed in the Roman schools. One of the most renowned masters of that day, Saint Hippolytus,[1] had composed a treatise specially devoted to refuting their inventions. Another doctor of the same school, Caius, the priest, seems to have been quite as eager in defending the authenticity of John's Gospel,[2] and his evidence is all the more noteworthy since he shared the opinions of the Alogi, in so far as the Apocalypse is concerned, and, deeming this book below the level of the Apostle's other works, he attributed its authorship to John's adversary, Cerinthus.

The same remarks would apply, after a study of the ensuing period, to Dionysius of Alexandria and Eusebius of Cæsarea.[3] They, too, questioned whether the Apocalypse could have been written by the son of Zebedee; but so far

[1] Ὑπερ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγελίου καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως found engraved on a marble fragment in 1551 in the cemetery of Hippolytus.

[2] Camerlinck, *De Quarti Evangelii Auctore*, pp. 80–85.

[3] S. Dionysius of Alexandria and the historian Eusebius, not willing to recognize the son of Zebedee as the author of the Apocalypse, were at a loss as to what John they should ascribe it to. Now a disciple of that name appears twice in a list of Apostolic men given by Papias (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. xxxix). Eusebius suggests the idea of regarding these as two distinct personages, — the Apostle John, author of the Gospel, and a simple Elder of Ephesus, "John the priest," whom we are to thank for the visions of Patmos. Rationalistic exegesis, in quest of arguments to evade the unanimous evidence of tradition, affects to believe that this hypothesis offers a solution to the whole Johannine problem. A supposition hazarded by the Bishop of Cæsarea appears so likely in their eyes that they consider it incontestable. It is strange they should lend so much weight to a supposition diffidently proposed by Eusebius. Accordingly many critics refuse to admit the actual existence of this "priest John" whom no one, prior to the fourth century, had ever heard of. Their arguments, which to me at least appear decisive, will be found in Camerlinck's *De Quarti Evangelii Auctore*, pp. 52–125.

as the Gospel is concerned, there is no sign in their writings of any similar hesitancy; with one voice and in harmony with their contemporaries they attribute it "to the disciple whom Jesus loved, to John, the Apostle and Evangelist."[1] Thus, then, in the first centuries the Alogi are the only ones who run counter to the opinion of all the churches. Now any one may judge, from the sketch given above of the small group in opposition, just how much credibility is due to their assertions. From the outset they were despised and confuted, while in after days they continue to rest under a cloud, insomuch that Saint Epiphanius, finding them leaderless and nameless, invented the nickname "Alogians," to designate them, thus branding them, at one and the same time, as having rejected the "Logos" of Saint John, and, consequently, as being "men devoid of reason."[2]

Even such critics as are bent on denying the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel, for intrinsic reasons, recognize the necessity of backing up this paltry testimony in their favor. To accomplish their end, they have drawn largely on their imaginations. Some have invented a sect of Roman Alogi, which never existed as an historical fact;[3] others assert that in certain documents of this epoch there are traces discoverable of an opposition to the authenticity of our Gospel; they quote as of especial weight a Latin prologue to Saint Mark,[4] certain doctrines professed by the Antitrinitarian heretics, and Theodotus of Artemon.[5] None of these laboriously erected fabrics rests on a solid foundation. Were they capable of withstanding the objections brought against them, they would, after all, be adding but a few discordant notes to the outcries of the Alogi. And what

[1] S. Dionysius, quoted by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, vii. xxv; iii. xxiii).

[2] S. Epiphanius, *Hær.*, li. iii.

[3] See Rose, *La question Johannique. Les Aloges asiates et les Aloges romains*, vi. pp. 516–534. 1897.

[4] Corssen, *Monarchianische Prologe zu den vier Evangelien*, pp. 30–50. Leipzig, 1896. For a refutation of this hypothesis, see Camerlinck, *De Quarti Evangelii Auctore*, pp. 177–189.

[5] See Camerlinck, *op. cit.*, pp. 173 *et seq.*

weight should be given to such a small minority against the mass of witnesses who, in the second and third centuries, concur in quoting the Gospel "according to St. John" and assure their hearers of its authenticity? Most of all, of what avail are they when opposed to the formal declarations of Saint Irenæus? His evidence is so overwhelming that our opponents, in their efforts to weaken it, have been reduced to the necessity of discrediting this witness. Were we to believe them, the venerable Bishop of Lyons, held in such high esteem down to our day, was a weak and credulous creature, devoid of all critical acumen, quite capable of becoming confused in his childhood reminiscences and turning them into falsehoods, whenever the opinion he wishes to uphold would be benefited by such a travesty of the truth.[1] To go to such lengths as this in their detractions is equivalent to confessing the weakness of their own case; furthermore, it is a grievous misrepresentation of the distinguished part played by Saint Irenæus in the history of the second century and that supreme mastery and profound knowledge of the Scriptures displayed by him in the doctrinal discussion of his times. Thereby they seek to destroy the high reputation he enjoyed among his contemporaries, a renown so widespread, not alone in Gaul, but at Rome and in the East, that he felt warranted in intervening as arbitrator between Pope Victor and Polycarp of Ephesus.

That this illustrious Father of the Church sometimes showed himself deficient in critical powers and was led into inserting certain legendary tales into his works[2] is un-

[1] This prejudiced view is the more noteworthy in the case of M. Renan, and surprises us coming from so well balanced a mind; others, less critical, push it to the last extreme. What shall we say of the opinion expressed in one of the latest works of Protestant exegesis: Irenæus "gulps down, with infinite delight, the most stupid traditions." And elsewhere, "Accordingly there is no reason why we should contest the veracity of Irenæus' evidence *a priori*. But we may be allowed to question whether he has not deluded himself as to the exact purport of his childhood's reminiscences, by ruminating over them with the sole end in view of how best to use them for the refutation of his adversaries." Jean Réville, *La Quatrième Évangile*, p. 10.

[2] One of the principal errors laid at S. Irenæus' door is that he held

deniable; but it should be borne in mind that this was precisely the one weak point common to all the historians of old. Not even the most serious among them — Livy, Tacitus, Pliny — are exempt from this failing. From this no one argues that, so far as their essential facts are concerned, these authors do not merit our confidence. In the same spirit it behooves us to judge the evidence offered us by Saint Irenæus as to the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel. Assuredly the question must have seemed a crucial one to his thinking, since he frequently has recourse to this sacred book,[1] and it was of capital importance to him to know whether the text he was using contained but an echo of Apostolic traditions, or whether it was the very words of one of the Twelve. Now no one — and we cannot insist upon this point too strongly — was in a better position to ascertain this than was he. Himself a pupil of the immediate disciples of Saint John, he received from them the Gospel as being the Apostle's own handiwork, and it would seem that these Asiatics were quite as well informed as we moderns are, as to the origin of the sacred book.

As to the internal notes of authenticity, — in other words, those which become apparent on examination of the text itself, — there is little need to dilate upon them here, because the proofs enumerated above would appear ample for our purpose. It is interesting, nevertheless, to note how, from a fine feeling of modesty, not at all surprising in so high-souled a character, although Saint John in the course of his work often refers to himself, it is never by name: in the first place, where he tells of the calling of the Apostles, and relates the words of Jesus' appeal to the two disciples, "one of whom was Andrew, Simon's brother,"[2] scholarly

that the Christ lived to be over thirty-three, almost fifty years of age. This idea he based, in part, on the reply of the Jews to Jesus when He claimed to be as old as Abraham, "Thou art not yet fifty years old and hast thou seen Abraham?" Compare *L'Évangile selon S. Jean*, by P. Calmes, pp. 15 *et seq.*

[1] See A. Resch, *Aussercanonische Paralleltexte zu den Evangelien, viertes Heft.*, passim.

[2] John i. 35, 43.

writers have agreed that, in all probability, this is the first covert allusion to the son of Zebedee in his history of his intercourse with Jesus.[1] Certain it is that John covers as with a veil all circumstances surrounding this divine intimacy, as though he feared by revealing he might profane it: "the other disciple," "the disciple that Jesus loved";[2] after such circumspect fashion he conceals his individuality. These forms of speech imply that the person alluded to is well known to the reader, and the circumstances under which they occur testify that the person was an Apostle. Finally, the same formula recurs, after the manner of a conclusion to the last chapter:[3] "this is that same disciple who testifieth to these things, and we know that his testimony is true." Granted the fact recorded by the Synoptics that Jesus honored with a special degree of confidence three of His Apostles, Peter, James, and John;[4] that James was dead long before the composition of the Fourth Gospel (in the year 44); that Peter, on the other hand, is explicitly designated in this work as distinct from "the disciple whom Jesus loved,"[5] the conclusion is inevitable that this disciple must be John himself. Then, again, we are haunted by the feeling that between this Apostle and the anonymous author of the book there is a connection so intimate as to strongly suggest a personal identity. His well-known modesty easily explains this mystery which he guards so carefully. At all events, nothing could bear less resemblance to the conduct of the apocryphal authors, who vie with one another in lending undue prominence to the personage whose name and rôle in life each endeavors to usurp.[6]

[1] This line of reasoning is very clearly carried out in P. Calmes' *L'Évangile selon S. Jean*, 99. 29 *et seq.* 1904.

[2] John xiii. 23; xviii. 15–16; xix. 26; xx. 2, 10; xxi. 20.

[3] John xxi. 24.

[4] Examples thereof are numerous; at the Transfiguration, Matt. xvii. 1; Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 28; at the healing of Jairus' daughter, Mark v. 37; Luke viii. 51; in the Garden of Olives, Mark xiv. 33; Matt. xxvi. 37.

[5] John xiii. 24; xviii. 15 *et seq.*; xx. 2; xxi. 7, 20, etc.

[6] These supposititious works generally betray their origin in a manner much more direct, and are bent especially on accentuating the names

To all these evidences let us add but one more conclusion, the importance of which, doubtless, none will dispute, since it emanates from the man who, more than any one else, has helped to undermine the authority of the Gospels in France.[1] "But especially 't is the reading of the book itself which most impresses us. Therein the author speaks always as an eye-witness; he would have us believe that he is the Apostle John. Consequently, if this work is not really by the Apostle, we are forced to consider it as a forgery, of which fact the author at least must be fully cognizant. Now, though the ideas of that period, so far as literary honesty is concerned, differed widely from ours, yet in the Apostolic age there is no example of a counterfeit document of this character." And after a study of the text in detail, he concludes, "Hence the lack of order in the composition, the unevenness of movement . . . are features which are quite inexplicable if we suppose this Gospel to be nothing more than a theological thesis, historically valueless; but which, on the contrary, are easily understood if we consider them, in conformity with ancient tradition, as the recollections of an aged man." [2]

which they try to make use of as their passports. Here there is nothing of the kind. Supposing that the author had wished to deceive his readers, he doubtless would have felt that he must pose as an Apostle in so many words. But this he is so little inclined to do that when introducing the only John that he mentions by name, he does not even add the distinguishing term "the Baptist," as is done everywhere else. One would, therefore, be rather inclined to judge that he was anxious to have his readers forget that there was another of that name who might have played a part in his narrative. Reuss, *Theol. Johannique*, p. 100. — The apocryphal *Gospel of Peter* furnishes us with frequent examples of the methods of the forgers: "*And I, Simon Peter with Andrew my brother* took our nets," etc., pp. 59, 60.

[1] Renan, *Origines du Christianisme*, i. Introduction.

[2] Were it needful to add anything to this decisive testimony it could be supported by that of an undeniable authority, Professor Harnack (*Chronologie*, i. p. 675), who recognizes that the author of the Fourth Gospel and the Seer of the Apocalypse are one and the same person. Now the author of the Apocalypse does give his name as John; he dwells in Asia Minor and occupies a position of considerable authority in the Hierarchy, since he can venture to address weighty monitions to the "Seven Churches." Such

II.

Between the Fourth Gospel and the Epistles of Saint John there are notes of resemblance so close and, taken as a whole, so striking, that the first of these Epistles has ever been considered to be an introductory note to the Gospel. Its prologue, couched in the same mystical style; the unity of their fundamental ideas concerning the world and the Christ, the place accorded to His creatures by God; the same abstract images, as "to abide with God, in light, in darkness, in death;" the identity of thought and language, what more were needed to lead us to conclude that the authorship is likewise identical? Accordingly the authenticity of the First Epistle has scarcely ever been questioned before our times. Among ecclesiastical writers of the remotest antiquity we find it asserted. Saint Polycarp and Papias, both of them disciples of the Apostle Saint John, give evidence of familiarity with it. According to the statements of Eusebius, the latter even made literal quotations therefrom.[1] Saint Irenæus reproduces two passages from the first Epistle,[2] expressly declaring that it is actually

an act would be fitting only in a man clothed with unquestionable prerogatives, such as his intimacy with Jesus lent to the last survivor of the Twelve.

It seems unnecessary to increase the length of this dissertation, unavoidably rather abstract, by going into a special discussion of the three passages in the Fourth Gospel the authenticity of which has been most rigorously assailed: the Angel at the Pool of Bethesda (v. 3, 4,); the narrative of the adulterous woman (ch. vii. 53; ch. viii. 11); finally, the last Chapter (xxi). The first two episodes are wanting in a large number of manuscripts. Chapter Twenty-one, on the contrary, is reproduced by all; the only reasons for impugning its authenticity are internal ones. A careful study of these three passages, with a closely reasoned array of arguments, is to be found in the *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, article: *Évangile de S. Jean*, signed by M. Mangenot.

[1] Phil. viii. — Funk, *Patrum Apos. Opera*, i. p. 274. Tübingen, 1887. — Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. xxxix. vol. xx. col. 300.

[2] S. Irenæus, *Adv. Hæres*, iii. 16, no. 8.

the work of Saint John. His testimony is confirmed by Eusebius.[1] The Canon of Muratori repeats the first verse and draws certain conclusions from it. From that date down to to-day, tradition is so unanimous that it would seem useless to dwell more at length on it.[2] We may pause to note, however, that Dionysius of Alexandria, though agreeing with the Alogi in their denial of the authenticity of the Apocalypse, parts company with them when they impugn that of the First Epistle,[3] which he regards as incontestable.

The same evidence can be called in support of the two other Epistles, which differ from the First in many points. While the latter would appear to have been written with the view of addressing the universal Church, and in length and general make-up is cast in the mould of a doctrinal exposition, the Second and Third Epistles are mere notes addressed to certain specified persons, — one a lady, designated under the name of Electra, by which it is supposed is meant some particular church; the other to a Christian in Asia Minor, named Gaius. We shall examine the general tenor of these documents in the body of this work. The tokens of authenticity are nearly the same for one as for the other. It seems self-evident, at first glance, that they were penned by one man's hand. In the opening words Saint John entitles himself "the Elder," a title apparently befitting his great age as well as his dignity as an Apostle, while serving at the same time to distinguish him from any other person of the same name. He makes use of the very terms of speech which are so noticeable in the First Epistle, and which harmonize so perfectly with the abstract style of the Fourth Gospel; finally, the errors he denounces are identical with those he is continually seeking to confute.

Notwithstanding all this, it would be a mistake to infer

[1] Eusebius, *op. cit.*, v. 8.

[2] Tertullian, *De Præscript.*, 33. — S. Cyprian, *Epist.*, xxv. no. 2; lvi. 2. — Clement of Alexandria, *Pædag.*, iii. 11, 12, etc.

[3] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, vii. 25.

that these two letters have, from the very first, been unanimously attributed to their real author. Though their existence in the earliest times is proven by either allusions or quotations found in Saint Polycarp, Saint Ignatius of Antioch, Saint Irenæus, Tertullian, the Muratorian Canon,[1] we have to come down to Saint Dionysius of Alexandria in our search for any really positive testimony in behalf of their authenticity.[2] Saint Jerome, though personally admitting it, states that this opinion is disputed.[3] It is not until the time of Pope Saint Damasus that we find, in his Canon of the Bible, an echo of the rumors which ascribed the authorship of these two last Epistles to some one other than Saint John.[4] Eusebius of Cæsarea puts them in the list of disputed texts.[5] But, once arrived at the fourth century, the council of Hippo, Saint Augustine and the letter of Pope Innocent I to the Bishop of Toulouse leave no doubt that the belief of the church on this question was thenceforth fixed in consonance with its teachings ever since that time.[6] As these two documents were, after all, but cursory notes addressed to individuals, it is small wonder that the ancient fathers did not regard them as of an importance anyway equal to that of the Apostle's more weighty productions.

[1] S. Polycarp, *Philipp.*, vii. 3; in Funk's *Opera Patr. Apost.*, i. p. 271. — S. Ignatius, *Smyrn.*, iv. 1; ibid., p. 236; Tertullian, *De Pudicit.*, 19, ii. col. 1020; *Muratorian Canon*, ii. col. 170.

[2] In Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, vii. 25.

[3] S. Jerome, *Epist.*, l. iii. no. 8.

[4] *Demonstrat. Evangel.*, iii. 5, vol. xxii. col. 216.

[5] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. 25.

[6] S. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christi*, ii. 8, vol. xxxiv. col. 41.

III.

The Apocalypse, on the contrary, occupies so striking a place among the works of Saint John and represents a body of doctrines of such high import that we encounter vestiges of it in the earliest ages subsequent to its appearance. Indeed, there are few writings in existence the authenticity of which is of more ancient renown, as even those who contest its claims confess.[1] Saint John's own disciple, Saint Polycarp, refers to it when using expressions which are to be found nowhere else.[2] From the statements of Andrew of Cæsarea we learn that Saint Papias, another of John's disciples, Saint Methodius, and Saint Hippolytus, testified to its authority. Origen, the Alexandrian Clement, and Tertullian,[3] do not hesitate to mention it as being actually the work of that person who, in the very opening lines, declares he is the author. Theophilus of Antioch makes use of the Apocalypse to combat the heresiarch Hermogenus, who endeavored to combine the ideas of Zeno with the dogmas of Christianity.[4] Saint Melito, Bishop of Sardis, one of those churches in whose behoof Saint John utters his warnings, writes an entire commentary on the Apocalypse.[5] Saint Irenæus is still more explicit. "It was not in the long ago," he says, "that this vision came to pass, but almost in our own day, toward the close of Domitian's reign."[6] Finally, Saint Justin, Martyr, in his dialogue with Trypho,[7] which took place in Ephesus itself,

[1] "Were we to listen to the most ancient witnesses, those who alone have any independent worth, no one of the Johannine writings is better certified to than the Apocalypse." Jean Réville, *Le Quatrième Évangile*, p. 37. — See F. Chr. Baur, *Kritische Untersuchungen über die Kanonische Evangelien*, p. 345.

[2] *Philip.*; inscript. v. col. 1005.

[3] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, vi. 25.

[4] Id. vi. 24; and v. 18.

[5] Eusebius, *op. cit.*, iv. 26.

[6] *Adversus Hæreses*, v. xxx. 3.

[7] *Dialogue with Trypho*, ch. lxxx. — Eusebius, iv. 18.

testifies distinctly to the existence and authenticity of John's Apocalypse. Among the canonical books, the Canon of Muratori mentions the Apocalypse of John and that of Peter.[1]

Thus, then, if we except the Alogi already spoken of above, it is a perfectly established fact that in the course of the first two centuries the Apocalypse was received throughout the whole Church as the authentic work of John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." Accordingly it is of little moment that in the age which followed, borne of the breath of dogmatic prejudices, a new school should have risen up to combat a belief theretofore unanimously accepted. It was Alexandria, the fatherland of all manner of abstractions and chimeras, which witnessed the birth of Millenialism. Its partisans appealed to a passage in the Apocalypse in support of their arguments that the righteous should reign a thousand years with the Christ.[2] Here, again, the Bishop of this city, Saint Dionysius, could conceive of no other way to dispel their errors save to deprive them of all semblance of Apostolic support. Accordingly, he endeavored to withdraw the paternity of this work from Saint John by attributing it to another personage, one equally venerable, but one who was not an Apostle. This solution, in the event so unfortunate, however laudable in its purpose, resulted in creating two absolutely contrary currents in public opinion, which little by little ran their course and disappeared, together with Millenialism which had set them in motion. Furthermore, we should note that Saint Dionysius could not avail himself of any traditional testimony, so completely were his doubts at variance with the common feeling then prevalent among Christians; hence he had been forced to confine himself to what we nowadays call "internal criticism," and it is precisely these remarks of his — couched in most respectful terms, let us

[1] There exist but a few fragments of the Apocalypse of Peter, collected by Hilgenfeld, *Novum Testamentum extra canonem receptum*, iv. 71, 74. 1884.

[2] Apoc., xx. 4–7.

add — which serve as basis for the arguments brought forward by the rationalists of our times.

These scholars seek to emphasize, not without laying themselves open to the charge of exaggeration, the alleged divergencies between the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel; some acknowledging, others denying the authenticity of the latter book, their general conclusion being that the two documents could not emanate from the same author. Neither one, however, takes into account as a possible factor Divine Inspiration, which, as it is diverse according to the variety of conditions and the ends in view, must needs, in some degree, justify the differences, which, considered in this light, can easily be interpreted. Of these we shall examine but the principal ones, which have to do with the manner of speech and the ideas.

It would be childish to deny that in literary workmanship the Apocalypse and the Gospel in no wise resemble one another. One is a prophetic revelation; the other, a doctrinal recital. Can any one deny that the self-same mind is capable of composing works in very various forms and fashions, especially granting the fact that all the circumstances of his age, his times, and his surroundings have largely altered? As has just been said, the Apocalypse is an example of poetic prophecy; what is there surprising in the fact that it is inspired by the speech and reproduces the visions of the ancient Seers, held in such veneration by Israel, on whose dreams John's earliest recollections had been nurtured? We might say that the whole work is altogether a tissue of imagery drawn from Daniel and Ezechiel. Consequently, we might expect it to reproduce, up to a certain point, the turn of the phrases, if not the very locutions, which embody the individual genius of the Hebraic tongue. Nevertheless there are many expressions to be found therein peculiar to the author, which are nowhere to be met with save in the Gospel attributed to him.[1] A closer study of the composition of his later production reveals the reasons which caused

[1] These are to be found in the *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, under Apocalypse, p. 746.

this change of style. Living so many years in Ephesus, among Alexandrian Greeks, becoming wonted to their language and their abstract modes of thinking, John clothes his thoughts in consonance with his environment, at first from sheer force of habit, thereafter intentionally, with the idea of appealing more strikingly to those he desired to convince.

As to the thoughts advanced, when scrutinizing those enumerated in the Apocalypse, it behooves us to bear in mind always that saying of Saint Jerome: "In this Book are contained as many mysteries as there are words." In so far as we are able to fathom their exact meaning, we notice no antinomy between the prophetic enthusiasm of the Vision of Patmos and the Christology of the Gospel of Ephesus. They are different views, or rather it is one and the same object contemplated under various aspects, nowhere are there any contradictory doctrines. The end the Gospel keeps ever in view is to relate the History of the Incarnate Word, dwelling among men under those conditions of lowliness and self-humiliation wherewith He clothed Himself, that He might teach us by His example to bear patiently the trials of man's daily life. The principal underlying theme is that supreme act of renunciation of Jesus for our sake, an act which, nevertheless, in no wise alters His unity with His unseen Father. The spirit which rules throughout is a spirit of loving-kindness, as befits the Redeemer of the world, the Good Shepherd, Who giveth His life for His sheep.[1] Therein Jesus declares that He is obliged to use an earthly language to men, knowing well that, were He to speak that of Heaven, He would not be understood.[2] Ever and anon, however, despite this unfailing gentleness, we are thrilled by His warnings to those who harden their hearts against the Faith: the wrath of God abideth on them and He shall blot them out of life.[3]

Is not this "language of Heaven," so hard to understand, and which Jesus was so reluctant to use, precisely that of the Apocalypse, as reported by John after he had listened

[1] John x. 2–14. [2] Id. iii. 12. [3] Ibid., 36.

to it in the mysterious colloquies of Patmos? Far from contradicting the teachings of Jesus, rather it completes them, by exhibiting the crowning of the work of Redemption in the definitive triumph of its Author. The Gospel tells us of the first advent of the Christ, lowly as is that humanity wherein He arrayed Himself; the Apocalypse foretells to us His second coming, glorious as is the Divinity which is His very nature. The diadem of spiked thorns, which crimsoned the brow of the Lamb Divine, is changed into a nimbus of sparkling stars; instead of the insults of the mob and the blows of ruffian soldiers, He is greeted by the hymning of virgins' voices, by the prostrations of ancient worthies, by the incense of God's chosen ones; Calvary's hill-top, which He had once climbed with stumbling steps, is become the site of His throne where the whole world shall worship Him; Jerusalem, the guilty city, that slaughtered the prophets and shed the blood of a God, purified by its ruin, is transformed into the Heavenly City, flashing with precious stones.

There all things shall be set aright in accordance with justice: the righteous shall stand forth, glorified for their constancy and their faith; the wicked, stricken with confusion at their own rebelliousness, shall render homage by their sentence to the God who punishes them. It is the coming of that Kingdom so long predicted; the return of the Christ, awaited by the church ever since He left her; but howsoever triumphantly He may demean Himself, does not that figure of the Lamb recall, as it were, by consummating it, the gentle spirit of the Gospel? And although in no other part of the Scriptures are the great truths of the Faith set forth in more majestic imagery, nowhere else, perhaps, is their penetrating sweetness brought nearer to our hearts. Where shall we look for words of deeper pity for our human wretchedness? "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, nor mourning, nor crying, nor pain."[1] This the Church has ever understood: wherefore, in her Office of the Dead, she sets those words

[1] Apoc. xxi. 4.

of Jesus at Lazarus' tomb, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in Me, though he be dead, yet shall he live,"[1] side by side with these others which a voice from Heaven bade the Seer write down: "Blessed are they that die in the Lord, they shall rest from their labours and their works shall follow them."[2] John's Gospel and Apocalypse are verily written by one and the same hand; both proceed from the heart of one man.

[1] John xi. 25. [2] Apoc. xiv. 13.

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SAINT JOHN.

CHAPTER I.

JEWRY AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

NEVER was any city more utterly laid waste than Jerusalem, when, spent of breath and of blood, she had fallen at length beneath the pikes of the legionaries. We have seen, at the close of the foregoing narrative,[1] with what fury the ruthless soldiery swept down upon the wreckage of that unhappy town. With the exception of a remnant of its ramparts, kept to enclose their camping-place, together with some of the Herodian towers, for a memorial of their victory, everything had been razed to the ground: houses, monuments, walls. And, lest any man dare dream of dwelling in these waste places, the Tenth Legion was quartered midmost the scene of devastation, with orders to keep it tenantless.[2]

Titus withdrew his army with him, never for an instant thinking that Judea, stricken to her very heart, could prolong the struggle further. Their fanatical rage

[1] *The Last Years of Saint Paul*, chap. xv.

[2] The main body of this army (*Legio Xma Fretensis*) continued to be stationed at this post assigned it by Titus, for, at the close of the II. Century it was still garrisoned in Judea (Dio Cassius iv. 23). Bricks found with the stamp of this Legion (L X F) witness to their having erected buildings there; other vestiges of their long sojourn, such as inscriptions, medals, etc., abound in the ruins and tombs of this region. *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, pp. 158–170, 1872. De Saulcy, *Revue Archéologique*, xx. 251–260, 1869; *Numismatique de la Terre-Sainte*, pp. 82–83, pl. v. nos. 3, 4; *Ephemeris Epigraphica*, ii. 292, n. 345; 293, n. 346; v. 618, n. 144. Merrill, *Quarterly Statements*, 1885, 133; 1886, 73. Schick, *Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina Vereins*, xii. 198, 199. 1889.

inspired the Zealots to this mad excess. They proceeded to fortify three strongholds on the shores of the Dead Sea: Herodium, Macheronte, Masada. As they would not hear of submitting to the conquerors, needs must that they be subdued by force.

The conduct of this campaign fell wholly to the commander of the sole legion left at Jerusalem,[1] for, after Vespasian's advent in Judea, the latter territory was made into a province distinct from that of Syria, having as its Governor the chief of the army of occupation.[2] Lucilius Bassus, being by this twofold title commissioned to preserve the peace of the land, marched against the fortresses of the Dead Sea. Herodium[3] was merely a princely residence poorly fortified; it fell at the first onslaught.[4] Macheronte[5] held out longer; it was reputed, for very good reasons, to be the strongest fastness in Judea next to Jerusalem,[6] for its battlements, perched along a craggy cliff, frowned down on deep ravines. All the advantages offered by such a position had struck Gabinius at the very outset of the Roman occupation; accordingly, deeming it one of the most dangerous points in case of an uprising among the Jews, he had hastened to dismantle it. Herod had restored it[7] and the legions beheld it

[1] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* l. vii. 1, 2–3.

[2] "Syriam et quatuor legiones obtinebat Lucinius Mucianus . . . bellum Judaïcum Flavius Vespasianus (ducem eum Nero delegerat) tribus legionibus administrabat." Tacitus, *Histor.*, i. 10; "Ceterum hic Syriæ, ille Judeæ praepositus, vicinis provinciarum administrationibus, invidia discordes, exitu demum Neronis, positis odiis, in medium consuluere," ibid. ii. 5. Cf. Aurelius Victor, *De Cæsar*, l. 9, epit. c. 9. Marquardt, *Römische Staatsverwaltung*, i. 419. P. von Rohden, *De Palæstina et Arabia provinciis Romanis Quæstiones Selectæ*, pp. 1–3. 1885.

[3] The site of Herodium is marked by the ruins which strew the slopes of *Djebel Fradis, — Franks' Hill.* See Guérin, *Judée*, vol. iii. 122–132. *The Survey of Western Palestine*, Memoirs by Conder and Kitchener, iii. 315–332. Ohlmann, *Die Fortschritte Ortskunde von Palästina*, i. Thl. pp. 17 *et seq.*

[4] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* l. vii. vi. 1.

[5] The modern *Mkaur*, to the East of the Dead Sea. See Parent, *Machærous*, Paris, 1868. Tristram, *The Land of Moab*, pp. 253 *et seq.* Duc de Luynes, *Voyage d'exploration à la Mer Morte*, Atlas, pl. 36–39.

[6] "Machærus secunda quondam arx Judeæ ab Hierosolymis." Pliny, *Histor. Natur.* v. 16, 72.

[7] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* l. 1. viii. 5; l. vii. vi. 2.

more threatening and redoubtable than of old, now fallen into the hands of implacable fanatics. The first encounters proving unfavorable to the Romans the outlook presaged a protracted siege; when, by a stroke of mere chance, during a sortie, the most active defender of the place fell into their clutches. This was a young man, of signal bravery, named Eleazar. Bassus, on learning that he was the soul of the rebellion, as well as the idol of the besieged, ordered that he be severely flogged before the eyes of his adherents; the soldiers had already set up the whipping-post, when of their own motion the gates of Macheronte were flung wide. The kinsfolk of the condemned hero were as numerous as they were powerful, and the whole city shared their anguish; hence the majority had consented to surrender in order to save Eleazar.[1] This capitulation, prompt as it was, did not disarm their vanquisher. Rome had no more mercy on Judea. Only the lives of such as had been instrumental in bringing about the surrender were spared; the rest were sold or slain. Bassus had no opportunity to follow up his successes; he died in the course of the expedition, delegating to his successor, Flavius Silva, the charge of taking Masada.[2]

Of the three strongholds which had remained in the hands of the Zealots, this one was, beyond question, the most difficult to invest. Built on a height fifteen hundred feet above the Dead Sea, it was intrenched by steep gorges. Two pathways led to it. One, climbing up from the shore, was but a stairway in the cliff, skirting the brink of dizzy depths; it was known as "The Serpent" because of its windings. The other, to the westward, offered a less perilous approach; but Herod had constructed a formidable tower which commanded its outlet. The fortress had been generously provided for by him in

[1] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* l. vii. vi. 1, 4.

[2] The craggy cliff, which nowadays is known by the name of *Sebbeh*, marks the site of Masada to the South of Engaddi. See Tuch, *Masada, die Herodianische Felsenfeste.* De Saulcy, *Voyage autour de la mer Morte*, i. 199 *et seq.*, Atlas, pl. xi-xiii. Rey, *Voyage dans le Haouran et aux bords de la mer Morte;* Atlas, pl. xxv-xxvi. *The Survey of Western Palestine*, Memoirs by Conder and Kitchener, iii. 418–421.

the event of a siege: with arms for more than ten thousand men, and a lavish stock of provisions kept constantly replenished. From this eyrie the Zealots flattered themselves they might withstand a long blockade, and grew more headstrong in proportion as it became apparent that the new Governor would entertain no proposals anyway smacking of compromise.

The latter, bent on carrying the place by assault, had proceeded forthwith to undertake prodigious outworks, and at the outset took position on a lofty eminence close to Masada and called Cape White. On this promontory he erected a gigantic embankment to a height of three hundred and fifty feet, which he surmounted with enormous stones. The machines of war, hoisted upon this elevation, dominated the ramparts and made many a breach; but, behind the walls thus battered down, the Zealots had raised a double palisade re-enforced by earthworks. To this the Romans set fire, at the outset almost to their own undoing; for a high wind, sweeping down from the north, beat back the flames in their faces; then, as suddenly, veering to the south, turned them on the besieged and soon reduced their wooden walls to ashes.

Night had fallen. Silva, secure of victory on the morrow, withdrew his troops into camp. That night of respite raised the Zealots' fury to the pitch of frenzy. Goaded by their leader, they took an oath that they would entomb themselves in their doomed citadel. Everything of any value was burned; women and children slaughtered; the men having killed one another, the last survivor set fire to the heart of the place, and then fell upon his own sword. At dawn the walls of Masada seemed desolate and hushed; no sound was there save the crackling of dying embers. The soldiers drew near distrustfully, fearing some ambuscade, when from out a cellar, they beheld two women and five children emerge. They, the only ones to escape the massacre, told the tale of that night of horrors, and all its excesses wherein expired forever the Jews' native land.[1]

[1] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* l. vii. viii. 1–7; ix. 1, 2.

All Judea, thereafter, was under the yoke of Rome: not alone the government of the country and its finances; but the soil itself, either by the enslavement or death of its inhabitants. Vespasian ordered its lands sold for the benefit of the Treasury;[1] then, not content with this clear profit, he demanded of the Jews dispersed throughout the Empire the two drachmas which they had paid annually to the Temple.[2] This tribute served in good stead for the rebuilding of the Sanctuary of the Capitol but recently set on fire and burned down. The poor beaten folk grievously resented this new sacrilege; yet they held their peace. Terror kept them with supple knees at Cæsar's feet, as prompt to obey his least behests as to disown any agitator capable of compromising them.

The Jews of Egypt, among whom the surviving Zealots had taken refuge, pushed this prudent policy to its extreme. Their communities, grown wealthy and populous, were not at all minded to welcome any disturbers of the peace. More enamoured of a quiet life, than concerned in the cause of patriotism or pity, they did not scruple at betraying to the Romans some six hundred of these wretched countrymen of theirs. The remnant fled; many into Upper Egypt, where they were shortly overtaken and put to death; others into Cyrenaïca, where they persisted in their agitations. A weaver, Jonathas by name, was the foremost fomenter of unrest; proclaiming himself a prophet, he gained such sway over the poorer class of Israelites that he managed to gather together two thousand of them and led them into the wilderness. The prominent men of Cyrenë, affrighted and powerless to check this threatening exodus, lost no time in denouncing them to the magistrates; but not in time to clear their own skirts from the general charge of rebellion. The blind rage of their Governor, Catullus, made no dis-

[1] He made an exception of the town of Emmäus and its environs which he bestowed in fee simple to eight hundred of his veterans. The present village of Kolonich, sixty stadium from Jerusalem, preserves the name and marks the location of this colony (Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* l. vii. vi. 6).

[2] Josephus, ibid. Dio Cassius, lxvi. 7. Suetonius, *Domitian*, 12.

criminations. All the Jewish communities of Cyrenaïca were, with but few exceptions, sacked and gutted; their holdings, which were very large, confiscated. To such excesses did these brutal measures give rise, that Vespasian thought best to disavow them.[1]

As a matter of fact, Rome's intention was to bow the Jews lower than ever beneath the yoke, but not to annihilate them. This is proven by the tolerant spirit she evinced, even in Palestine, at a time when she was bent on crushing the body politic of the nation. A noteworthy assemblage of Israelites had been licensed to live there under the ægis of the Roman peace. These were Pharisees, men of calm sense, who, foreseeing the outcome of the Zealots' frenzy, had, during the first days of outbreak, quitted Jerusalem and made their abode in the Plain of the Philistines.

The goodly group of Doctors that had foregathered with these refugees, naturally became their leaders; nevertheless he who was destined to the headship, Johanan-Ben-Zakkaï, would seem to have been one of the last to join company with them.[2] Though none better than he realized the necessity of flight, or urged it more insistently, he strove to the bitter end with the madmen who were working the ruin of the Holy City, nor would he consent to depart till he saw that their madness had completely gained the upper hand. It was late indeed to come to this conclusion, and accordingly he found the doors locked.

"None leaves here, save the dead," the fanatics assured him.

"Put me in a coffin," Johanan bids his disciples, "and bear me without the city walls!"

At the gates, the guards wish to probe its contents with their lances.

[1] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* l. vii. x. 10; l. xi. 1; *Ant. Jud.* l. xiv. 2.

[2] Several passages in the Talmud lead us to infer that, even before the destruction of Jerusalem, the city of Jabneh boasted of a School and a Tribunal which were already regarded as high authorities. *Sanhedrin*, ii. 4. Cf. *Aboth* of Rabbi Nathan, iv.

"What would you do!" cries Ben Batiah. "Do you wish to be accused of having transfixed the body of one of your Doctors?"

They let the funeral train pass, and Johanan, once deposited in a cemetery, easily found his way thence to the Roman camp. There he foretold to Vespasian his speedy elevation to the throne.[1] You will recall how, during the war in Galilee, a similar prophecy won for Josephus the favor of the Flavians.[2] Johanan was quite as fortunate in his prediction. He was graciously permitted to retire to Jabneh.[3] He was well aware that the School of that city had flourished exceedingly ever since Salomë, sister of Herod the Great, had been given it in appanage. Thither the Jews flocked in numbers; the advantages of its port, its great trade in grain, the presence of a Roman Procurator,[4] all went to make it most attractive to people in search of a secure livelihood. In this harbor of refuge Johanan found a well-merited reward for his career of self-sacrifice: a gathering of enlightened minds; many Doctors, who, long since in Jerusalem, had been wont to look up to him as their leader and who here hastened to accord him the same pre-eminence.

Growing the more attached to their native land the more keenly they realized that its doom was sealed, these pious Israelites awaited in common anguish of soul the end of the struggles they had been unable to prevent. When the fleeing victims began to arrive with their tales of the death-throes of the Holy City, the Temple burned down, its last defenders perishing by the sword or by hunger, its very ruins razed to earth, Johanan and his

[1] *Midrasch-rabba* on the Lamentations, . 5; *Gittin*, 56 *a* and *b*.

[2] *The Last Years of Saint Paul*, chap. xiv.

[3] *Shekalim*, i. 4. *Rosh-hashana*, iv. 1. Jebneh (now called Yebna) is situated on an eminence and surrounded by a fertile plain, four hours' journey to the south of Jaffa: half an hour's walk separates the modern village from the sea.

[4] Rabbi Nathan, *Aboth*, iv. Talmud of Bab., *Gittin*, 5, 6, *b*. Mischna, *Sanhedrin*, xi. iv.

[5] Josephus, *Antiq. Jud.* l. xviii. vi, 3, 4. *Demai*, ii. 4. *Bereschit rabbi*, lxxvi.

disciples rent their garments with sobs and groans.[1] This season of mourning was destined to last many and many a day, for the fate of such of the brethren as had escaped the massacre was to be still more heart-rending. We have seen how Titus drove his captives in herds before him, tossing them piecemeal to the beasts in the amphitheatres along his way; the rest were either sold in groups, or fell a prey to the brutal passions of their conquerors.[2] This crowning outrage cut Israel to the heart; and so, among the incidents of that day set down by the Doctors of Jabneh, we come across this touching story: Two children, with noble souls befitting their high lineage, spent one wretched night together in a place of ill-fame, quietly weeping over the fate awaiting them. At daybreak the brother recognized his sister in the poor creature who had been the companion of his grief. They fell into each other's arms and so expired.[3] A number of similar instances in the Talmud bear witness to the depth of indignities whereby the noblest families were overwhelmed; here, the daughter of Nicodemus Ben Gorion, a prince of finance, forced to pick up the grains dropped from the horses' mangers to still the pangs of hunger; and again, the wife of the High Priest Josuah Ben Gamala, her long locks tied to the tail of an Arabian courser, dragged an unsightly corpse from Jerusalem to Lydda.[4]

Howsoever righteous and justifiable their paroxysms of grief at such infamous spectacles might be, the Doctors of Jabneh took care that they should not fall into a state of hopeless despair. Some of the mourning ones declared that henceforth they should devote their lives to fasting and prayer; they put all pleasures under a ban, even the use of meat and wine, because these could no longer be offered as an oblation in the Temple.[5] Johanan pleaded mildly with them, urging that the best of all

[1] Rabbi Nathan, *Aboth*, chap. iv.
[2] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* l. vii. ii. 1; iii. 1; viii. 7.
[3] *Midrasch-rabba*, on the Lamentations, i. 16; *Gittin*, 58 *a*.
[4] *Midrasch-rabba*, ibid.; Talmud of Jer., *Ketubot*, v. 11; *Gittin*, 56 *a*; *Sifre* on Deuteronomy, 305.
[5] Mischna, *Sota*, ix. 15; and *Tosifta*, ibid. xv.

sacrifices, those of the heart and the doing of kind deeds, would ever remain possible.[1] His disciples seconded his efforts to this end.

"My friends," said Rabbi Josuë to these distraught creatures, "why do you abstain from meat and wine?"

"The Altar is destroyed," was their cry. "Shall we eat the flesh which can no longer be offered thereon? Shall we drink the wine which no longer flows there as a libation?"

"Well, then, let us eat no more bread," replied Rabbi Josuë, "since the offerings of grain are likewise abolished."

"Then it remains for us to live on fruits," they hazarded.

"Fruits! Why, how can we use them since we no longer offer the First Fruits in the Temple?"[2]

The true spirit of Israel is repelled by anything which savors of excess: to whatsoever depth of misfortune it is plunged, its practical sense, the instinct to keep on living and doing, dominates all its woes. And so Johanan went to the bottom of these pious exaggerations when he declared that their chiefest business was, not to succumb to the awful aspect of things about them, but rather to unite the more closely the scattered sons of the House of Israel. The Temple gone, Jabneh's Synagogue was there with its already far-famed School: why not allow it to supply the place of the destroyed city? This was the height to which Johanan's intellect had risen, encouraged by the whole college of disciples, whose picture we possess vividly penned by his own hand.

"Eliezer Ben Hyrcanos is a cistern, well cemented, wherefrom no drop is lost.

"Josuë Ben Hananiah is a threefold thread, not easily broken.

"Josea Haccohen, a model of piety.

"Like the reservoir, Simeon Ben Nathanael stores up water in the desert.

[1] Talmud of Babylon, *Baba bathra*, 10 *b*.
[2] Rabbi Nathan, *Aboth*, chap. iv.

"Eleazar Ben Arach has all the wild dash of the torrent; a plentiful stream, rapid running and oft overflowing."[1]

All these portraits are of scholars faithful to the Mosaic Law; yet evermore true to their broad convictions, with all the rectitude and vigor needful to confront actual conditions and take the measures proper for their purposes. Urged on by men of such calibre, Johanan might well feel justified in seriously attempting to make Jabneh the heir of Sion.

At first it would seem that the movement was conducted somewhat confusedly: each one following his own initiative with perfect independence, for Johanan had not the masterful temperament requisite to control intellects all, or nearly all, superior to his own. A lovable, gentle, old man he was, and of such fine courtesy that none ever forestalled him in social greetings;[2] prone, too, to fancy that nothing more was needful to assure the triumph of Judaism, than an open-minded exposition of it, as standing ready and willing to regenerate the world. More far-seeing than their venerable Master, one of his disciples, Gamaliel II., realized that, if Israel was to be kept together as a nation, the most pressing need was to unite it anew under one headship, which, by dominating and binding together its members, should maintain its energies. The Sanhedrin had filled these functions during the last few centuries; but they could not hope to re-establish this body, since, besides being endowed with doctrinal authority, it had enjoyed a goodly share in matters of government, and this Rome never would tolerate again once Jerusalem was destroyed. With keen statesmanship Gamaliel willingly sacrificed everything which might give umbrage to the Governors of Palestine; he merely begged leave to found a sort of Academy to decide upon questions of doctrine and observances. Rome took slight notice of any speculative debates; her natural craving being for authority, she chose to regard this institution as

[1] Rabbi Nathan, *Aboth*, chap. xiv.

[2] *Mechilta* on Exodus, xx. 22; Talmud of Babylon, *Beracoth*, 17 *a*.

a hopeful means of preserving peace between the numerous Jewish contingents of the Empire. The sole precaution deemed necessary was to keep it well in hand, in order to curb its activities when needful.

To this the Jews gladly agreed. The word "Sanhedrin," so liable to excite suspicions, was never uttered; the great School of Jabneh, henceforth to serve as an oracle to all other Synagogues, assumed the modest name of *Bet Din*, "House of Justice," and its presiding officer that of "Father of this House," Ab-Bet-Din; by his office he was entitled to exercise powers actually patriarchal over the entire race and to keep it as strongly bound together as ever it had been under the Nasi, Head of the Sanhedrin. Thus, under the constitution of the Empire, Israel recovered the place and privileges it had enjoyed formerly: the right of acting as a corporate body and administering its laws under the guardianship, and consequently under the protection, of the Roman magistrates. As Gamaliel II. had been the most effective agent in bringing about this restoration, he very naturally was raised to the headship of the School of Jabneh; he was formally elected presiding officer and his primacy was recognized by Rome.[1]

Johanan, thus supplanted by his disciples, wisely yielded his place. He retired to a village in the neighborhood called Berouz-Haïl,[2] and there, surrounded by certain Doctors who had accompanied him, devoted himself exclusively to propagating the spirit of Hillel,[3] the spirit of

[1] Mischna, *Eduïot*, vii. 7; Sanhedrin, 11 *a*.

[2] An obscure town situated not far to the east of Jabneh. See Derenbourg, *Essai sur l'histoire de la Palestine*, p. 306, note 4. *Shekalim*, i. 4; *Rosh-hashana*, iv. 1; *Sanhedrin*, 32 *a*.

[3] Indeed he had been a disciple of Hillel, if we are to believe certain Talmudists, who, to lend likelihood to their assertions, credit him with a longevity far beyond the ordinary age of mortals, — one hundred and twenty years; forty years in commerce, forty years in the schools in educating himself; forty years in educating others. *Rosh-hashana*, 31 *b*. Whether or not the great Hillel ever beheld Johanan seated at his feet, he had in him a student who, while continuing his conciliatory work, managed to mingle with Mosaism some of the leaven of charity and tolerance, thus rendering it accessible to Gentiles. For further facts concerning this illustrious Rabbi, see Derenbourg, *Essai sur l'histoire de la Palestine*, pp. 276–288, 302–318. Spitz, *Rabban Johanan Ben Sakkaï, Rector der Hochschule zu Jabneh*. Dissertation, Leipzig, 1883.

mercy, of peace, of forbearance, which, dwelling on the loftier summits of the Law, breathes in its highest truths and yearns to manifest it as the Light, as it is the Salvation, of all humankind.

The barriers raised up against the Gentiles by the School of Schammaï, were well-nigh completely swept away by him. "That same forgiveness which Israel seeks in its sacrifices," he has said, "the Pagans shall find in righteousness." [1] Hearing the Rabbi Josuë bewail the destruction of the Temple, he comforted him in terms more Christian than Mosaic in tone. "Do not give way thus to thy sorrow, my son. There still remains unto us a means of expiating our sins, well worth the other, — Charity. Does not the Scripture say: I prize mercifulness above sacrifices?" [2]

When the good Jonathan left *Bet Din* this wise spirit departed with him. Very different was the policy of Gamaliel, whose sole ambition was aimed at transforming Jabneh into a Jerusalem on a smaller scale, especially by attracting thitherward those pious Israelites who were wont to gather according to custom at the annual festivals in the Holy City.[3] As the Tenth Legion kept ceaseless guard over the ruins, these pilgrims of death could not penetrate thither save by stealth, in seasons of mourning and of flight. But at the foot of the Judean Mountains there was always Jabneh, whose renown was waxing greater every day. Where else should they go, to set forth those doubts and difficulties which formerly they had laid before the Sanhedrin? The necessity of furnishing a ready response to these questionings, whatever their nature, diverted the attention of the School of Jabneh to practical studies and made its Doctors in the first instance a body of casuists. This was the occasion of a division among them. Many whose souls were of too ardent a temper to be satisfied with such unattractive labors, left a school which they considered more political

[1] *Baba bathra*, 10 *b*.
[2] Osee, vi, 6. Rabbi Nathan, *Aboth*, chap. iv.
[3] Mischna, *Para*, vii. 6; *Tosifta*, ibid. chap. vi.

than religious in its teachings. Some rejoined their old Master, Johanan, at Berouz-Hail; others settled in Lydda,[1] or in the humble villages dotting the Plain of the Philistines, at Bakun, Gibthon, Gimso, Bene-Beraf.[2]

A far more powerful attraction than these divisions of opinion was the liberty allowed the Jews by Rome throughout this region, a freedom which soon peopled it with whole communities of their race. It was not long before these were spread along the whole length of the Plain which borders on the Sea, from Jaffa to Gaza, and from thence reached out to the South of Eleutheropolis, and Palestine, — the Darom[3] of the Talmud. This borderland being little frequented by Romans, had escaped their vigilance. Here the Jews increased and multiplied undisturbed, for the valleys which slope down from Juda to the Desert were in those days of the most fruitful description. Nowhere else were there olive-orchards which produced a finer oil than those of Thekoa;[4] Zoar dates bore a similar reputation;[5] the vineyards of Engaddi, whose praises are sung in the Canticles,[6] sent forth an unfailing and never varying vintage. The whole region was first and foremost a wine-growing country; it was from the neighborhood of Hebron that they obtained that famous cluster of grapes which had so astounded the Hebrews in the Desert.[7] But the fertility of the Darom was not its only glory: Israel's dearest recollections clustered about it. More than any other part of the

[1] *Rosh-hashana*, i. 6; *Taanith*, iii. 9; *Baba mezia*, iv. 3.

[2] Neubaeur, *Geographie du Talmud*, pp. 72–73, 78–80, 82. Derenbourg, *Essai sur l'Histoire de la Palestine*, pp. 306–307, 312.

[3] From the Hebrew "dârôm," "the southerly region." Job xxxvii. 17. Ezech. xl. 24. By this name Eusebius, S. Jerome, and the geographers of old designated the fertile plains which extend to the southern boundaries of Palestine, between the Mediterranean, the Arabah, and to the south of the Dead Sea. See S. Jerome, *Onomasticon* (s. v. *Darom*). Eusebius, ibid. (s. v. Γεραρα).

[4] Mischna, *Menahot*, viii. 3.

[5] Zoar was called the *City of the Date Trees*. Mischna, *Jebamot*, xvi. 8; *Pesachim*, 52 *a*.

[6] Cant. i. 13; ii. 13; vii. 12. *Sabbat*, 26 *a*. This land produced a balsam very highly esteemed.

[7] Num. xiii. 18–30.

Promised Land, it was associated in the popular mind with the great Patriarchs, who had made it their principal abode. The wells dug at the threshold of the Desert, Moladah,[1] Lahai-Roï,[2] Beersheba,[3] marked the halting-places of their herds. Under the oak-tree of Mambre Abraham had pitched his tent and offered sacrifice;[4] Macpela, the "double cave" of Hebron, contained his bones.[5] Isaac and Jacob had likewise encamped in "this country of the South," their gaze fixed on the Eternal, living but to hearken unto and obey His counsellings.[6]

That Voice from on High since then had never ceased to make itself heard: in divine Promises, in the Law, graven by God's own finger, in Prophecies, and inspired Songs, all combining together to form one volume, the "Book" above all others,[7] which had outlived the overthrow of Judaïsm, and now remained the sole treasure of Israel. Unhappily in the Darom, as at Jabneh, this priceless depository was used merely as a theme for sterile commentaries: outside a few master minds that glimpsed the living Spirit concealed beneath its wrappings, the common run of the Doctors devoted all their zeal to its outward aspects, the dead letter.

Nothing could be imagined more deadly dry than the Rabbinical criticisms. They sought, doubtless, to determine the meaning of the texts; but their main end in view was to torture its terms and extort from them extravagant and vain conclusions. When logical deduc-

[1] Josuë, xv. 21–26; xix. 2. 1 Paral. iv. 28. The modern *El-Mith*, on the road leading from Aïla to the Red Sea. The spot is deserted, but two ancient wells still attract the Bedouins thither. Robinson, *Biblical Researches*, ii. 200 *et seq.*

[2] Gen. xvi. 7, 14; xxiv. 62; xxv. 11.

[3] Ibid., xxi. 25–33.

[4] Ibid., xiii. 18; xiv. 13; xviii. 1 *et seq.* etc.

[5] Gen. xxv. 9.

[6] Ibid., xxv. 11; xxvi. 32–33; xxxvii. i. 14; xlvi. 1–5; l. 13.

[7] The word "Bible" has no other meaning: *τὰ βιβλία*, "The Books." In the middle of the second century, in a Homily wrongly attributed to S. Clement, we find this word employed to distinguish the books of the Old Testament from the Apostolic writings: *τὰ βιβλία καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι.* II. *Ep. Clement*, xiv. Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, S. Clement, vol. ii. pp. 202, 245.

tions failed them, they had recourse to forced and fanciful resemblances, to allegorical exegesis. Since the destruction of the Temple, the field for such discussions was become considerably restricted. All sacrifices and ceremonies having been suppressed, the prescriptions of Ritual were stripped of any interest; these topics they must needs forego, but, outside of the Liturgy, there remained a multitude of Observances, which seized upon the Jew at his birth, ordained his slightest actions, his food, his ablutions, his clothing; following him step by step until death, and thereafter in his funeral rites, to his tomb. In this wide domain Jewish subtility could find full scope for its exercise.

The Mosaic Code, clear as it is, had not foreseen, any more than it had provided for, such modifications as must result from differences of place, time, and circumstances. Accordingly, ever since the Captivity, the Colleges of Scribes had never ceased to strain, and sift, and regulate, the veriest trifles. A certain originality in their views, some noble sentiments, together with many ingenious discussions, had at first lent interest to their quibbles; but, little by little, other aims engrossed them, finally, that of preserving the solutions of cases handed down by the most renowned Doctors of the Law. Nowhere more than in the East are the decisions of a Master held in higher esteem. Often they are treated as being of the same force as the Law itself. These sayings, the accumulation of five centuries, went to make up a huge and undigested mass of legal opinion. The common run of Jews, overwhelmed by this farrago of forensic lore, gladly left the decision of all cases to the Scribes, which resulted in debasing their education to mere feats of memory. Then it was that, to facilitate their labors, they began to compile short collections of time-hallowed decisions,[1] which, by constantly being added to, became the

[1] One of the talmudic treatises, *Midolot*, was composed in great part by R. Eliezer-Ben-Jacob, toward the close of the second century. Two others, *Ioma* and *Tamid*, are attributed to a contemporary of the first Gamaliel, one Simeon of Mitspah. See Derenbourg, *Essai sur l'Histoire de la Palestine*, pp. 374–375.

body of Rabbinical traditions known under the name of *Mischna;* but the meaning of this word "Reproduction of Sayings Learned by Heart," sufficiently denotes the value of these writings.

Such occupations not only were unworthy of men of high intellect, worse still they evermore multiplied "the hedges about the Law;" while, for the people, they kept increasing the weight of the Observances, — that Pharisaism which the Saviour had declared intolerable.[1] Fresh decisions, ceaselessly creating and demanding new practices, so hampered the conduct of life as to make of it a continuous torment. One must needs be burthened with such a yoke from birth in order to bear up under it; who would ever dream of submitting himself to it of his own choosing? While the Synagogues of the Dispersion were all more or less engaged in casting off the servitude of the letter, thereby winning many proselytes, those of Palestine were shutting themselves up the more closely. Therein they believed, indeed, lay the only course to safeguard the Faith, and they exhausted their zeal in raising barrier upon barrier against the Gentiles. The "Eighteen Measures," which legally organized this separation, date from this epoch. They were proposed by one of the fiercest disciples of Schammaï, in the fever of Jerusalem's last days.[2] In these rules fanaticism goes so far as to forbid them to purchase anything from Pagans, to speak their language, to accept their gifts or their testimony, in a word, to have any dealings with them, as well in public life as in matters of religion.[3]

The disciples of Hillel had always set themselves in opposition to this mania for exclusiveness. They fully realized that Israel, already looked upon as a suspect and branded with contempt, bade fair to put itself outside the law of nations; they declared that such follies would prove as disastrous in the event as of old the worship of

[1] Matt. xxiii. 4.
[2] Mischna, *Aboda Zara*, ii. 5, 7.
[3] Talmud of Jerusalem, *Schabbath*, i. 7; Talmud of Babylon, *Schabbath*, 17 *a*.

the Golden Calf had proven.[1] The only response to their protests was the massacre of such as voiced them openly. The "Eighteen Measures" were thereafter maintained as all the more inviolable, — so they said, — now that their sanctity had been sealed by the blood of their opponents; thenceforth no one in authority durst so much as hint at their abolishment.

"The letter killeth,"[2] says St. Paul; Jabneh and the Synagogues of Palestine prove the truth of this sentence. With that book in their hands, wherein God speaks to us, yet refusing to open it save secretly and apart, they only deciphered its carnal, literal meaning; and this letter of the Law kept them prone on the ground,[3] unfitted for any heavenward flight. And, notwithstanding, that very Law which they, in their blindness, were destined to carry over the face of the earth, those same Prophecies, all that Testament of the Ancient Covenant remain to us, after nineteen centuries, a never-failing source of strength and light. How was it that they failed to draw similar life from it? Their task was to seek therein Him Who is its sole theme, — Jesus, foretold, prefigured on every page of "The Book." Abraham and the Saints of the Old Testament had done reverence to Him from afar in the Divine Promises;[4] athwart the ages their eyes had penetrated the invisible;[5] but it was the gaze of Faith, a grace whereto their unworthy brethren could lay no claim, since, after having crucified this same Jesus, they continued to revile Him. In the face of this stiffneckedness what could God do but "abandon them to their spirit of drowsiness and insensibility,"[6] leaving to them, in our day even as then, what they obstinately insisted on keeping, "eyes that they should not see, ears that they should not hear"?[7]

[1] Talmud of Jerusalem, *Schabbath*, i. 7; Talmud of Babylon, *Schabbath*, 17 *a*.
[2] 2 Cor. iii. 6.
[3] Rom. xi. 10.
[4] Heb. xi. 8–13.
[5] Ibid., xi. 27.
[6] Rom. xi. 8.
[7] Ibid.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHURCH OF JERUSALEM IN EXILE.

THE governmental tolerance obtained by the Israelites in the southern part of Judea was enjoyed in still more generous measure by their brethren converted to the Christ dwelling in the region beyond Jordan. We have seen how they took refuge there prior to the fall of Jerusalem and found a secure asylum in Pella.[1] This, however, in their eyes was to be but a temporary retreat, for none imagined that the Temple could pass away. Had not God declared unto Solomon "that He had set His Name upon that Sanctuary forevermore? That His eyes and His heart should be there perpetually"?[2] Titus might storm Jerusalem, sack and destroy it: the Holy of Holies would still remain.

When fire and sword had wreaked their worst, as pitiless to Mount Moriah as to all the rest of the town, especially when it became evident that Rome, now encamped amid the wreckage, would not permit it to be restored, then only did the members of the Mother Church realize that, for long time to come, their hopes were shattered, and that, like their forefathers on the banks of the Euphrates, they must resign themselves to living afar from Sion. The peaceful quiet of the locality whither they had been conducted by divine inspiration proved a soothing consolation. Agrippa II. was then reigning; shrewd statesman that he was, this Prince had contrived to guarantee his States from the evils of fanaticism which were desolating the rest of Judea by giving

[1] *The Last Years of St. Paul*, chap. xiv.
[2] 3 Kings, ix. 3.

the Romans a free entry into them. Under their protection populous and wealthy cities sprang up. The ruins of their public monuments, their colonnades still strewn over this territory, testify to the immense prosperity which must have flourished in that section of the Empire.

The Jews found ample room there to expand, for Agrippa's domain, constantly extended through Roman favor, comprised, besides the little kingdom of Chalcis, Batanæa, Trachonitis, Gaulanitis,[1] as well as other territories in Peræa and Galilee.[2] Pella, as we have seen, was their first halting place; but soon many of their number, pushing further northward, founded a community of equal importance at Kokaba.[3]

It was there that the kinsfolk of Jesus settled, and among them probably the head of the exiled Church, Simeon,[4] whom the Elders of Jerusalem had chosen to succeed Saint James in the Episcopate. The second pastor of the Holy City belonged to the family of the Saviour: as son of Cleophas, Saint Joseph's brother,[5] and of Mary, the Blessed Virgin's sister,[6] he was cousin german of Jesus.[7] Though he had not been called to the Apostolate, as were his brothers James and Jude, he had known and dwelt with the divine Master. Venerated by the Mother Church for this reason, he governed its faithful members

[1] Josephus, *Antiq. Jud.* l. xx. vii. 1; *Bell. Jud.* l. ii. xii. 8.

[2] Notably the cities of Tiberias, Tarichæa, Julias, and their environs. It was from Nero that Agrippa II. obtained this accession to his domains. Josephus, *Antiq. Jud.* l. xx. viii. 4; *Bell. Jud.* l. ii. viii. 2.

[3] S. Epiphanius locates Kokaba in the district of Basan, near Astaroth-Carnaïm. *Hæres*, xxx. 2.

[4] This Hebrew name Simeon is to be found in the list of our Lord's brethren given by the Evangelists, under the contracted form of Simon. Matt. xiii. 15; Mark vi. 3.

[5] Hegesippus quoted by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* iii. xi.).

[6] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* iii. xxxii.

[7] As to the ties of kinship which united the several members of the Saviour's family, I am merely following here along the same lines laid down in *The Christ, the Son of God* (vol. i. Appendix v.). That opinion seems to me, for a question so controverted as this, to offer the simplest and at the same time the best founded solution, for it is based on the most ancient traditions, on testimony which Eusebius adjudged worthy of implicit belief.

for many years, and it was not until about the year 110[1] that he received the martyr's crown, under Trajan.

If we are to believe Eusebius, thirteen bishops succeeded Saint Simeon in the twenty-two years which elapsed between his death and the revolt of Barcochebas (132).[2] So great a number of pastors ruling over the same See and within so short an interval, would seem to be an exaggeration; it is more likely that the list of names preserved by tradition is not that of his successors but of all the chief pastors, who, together with Simeon and after him, administered the Jewish Christian communities. Each one of these congregations, believing themselves banished but for a season from the Holy City, laid claim to the title of Church of Jerusalem. This is one of the distinctive features of those fraternities over beyond Jordan, precisely as we remarked them under the headship of Saint James, — pious, austere, edifying, but indissolubly attached to Israel's great past; unmoved by, and holding aloof from, that spirit of new life which everywhere else was regenerating the world by freeing it from the bondage of the Law.

This isolated condition rendered their means of subsistence ever more precarious from day to day. Paul was no longer there to recommend the needy saints of Jerusalem to the good offices of his converts. After his death what became of the yearly offerings which he had so benignantly decreed?[3] Was this collection still taken up, or, now that the national disaster had swept away the visible body of the Mother Church, did it seem impossible to trace the scattered members? Most of the exiles had nothing to rely on save the work of their hands: some years later the kinsmen of Jesus displayed to their persecutors, disquieted by tales of their noble lineage, the callous marks of toil which hardened their hands.[4] The Christians of the Hauran were therefore hard laboring men, less bent on personal ease than on the eternal promises. They bore their poverty with high courage, befit-

[1] Eusebius, *loc. cit.*
[2] Ibid., iv. v.
[3] 1 Cor. xvi. 1–4; 2 Cor. ix. 1–15.
[4] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* iii. xx.

ting these worthy followers of the holy pastor who had stamped their souls with his own brave spirit, — of that James, who launched his anathemas at the opulent and luxurious, proclaiming the poor "God's chosen ones, rich in the faith, heirs of the Kingdom set apart for them that love Him."[1] The expectation of this realm thrilled but did not disquiet them; they put their trust in the Heavenly Father, like the birds of the air that sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns.[2] Of all the Glad Tidings announced unto the world, it was the preaching in Galilee — Jesus of Nazareth — which furnished the favorite theme of their meditations. Accordingly, they were given the name "Men of Nazareth," — "Nazarenes,"[3] — a name they bore ages long, for at the end of the fourth century we find them still in the same district, keeping up the same fidelity to the observances, without having departed from Christian Orthodoxy.[4] The authority and the writings of Saint Paul, rejected by the Judaizing heretics, are acknowledged among them,[5] and, save in their faithful clinging to the Law, there is no point we can discover wherein they are not in harmony with the rest of the churches.

Though far less fecund than the others by reason of their adherence to the exhausted fountains of grace, these communities speedily sent out off-shoots to points at some distance from Hauran. Saint Jerome encountered one of their colonies in the northern part of Syria, at Aleppo, the ancient Berœa. During his lengthy sojourn among these believers, he noticed in their possession a Gospel, which, at first sight, he took to be the original

[1] James ii. 5.
[2] Matt. vi. 26.
[3] S. Epiphanius, *Hæres*, xxix. 1, 5, 6.
[4] Ibid., xx. 3; xxix. S. Jerome, *De Vir. Ill.* 3.
[5] It is generally agreed by the best critics that the book entitled *The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Migne, *Patrologia Græca*, ii. 1038–1150) was composed by a Jewish Christian; therein S. Paul and his work are spoken of in terms of highest eulogy. See in particular, the passage (much contested, it is true) in the *Testament of Benjamin* (xi.), where the character and mission of the apostle are foretold. Ritschl, *Die Entstehung der Altkatholischen Kirche*, pp. 171–177. 2d ed. Vortsman, *De Testamenti XII Patriarcharum Origine et Pretium.*

Aramæan[1] of Saint Matthew; but, on studying it closer, he recognized it as a distinct work, one of such importance that he took the pains not only to transcribe it, but to translate it into both Greek and Latin.[2] Among the Nazarenes this book bore the name of "The Gospel according to the Hebrews," or "According to the Apostles:" "More commonly," adds the holy Doctor, "they gave it the title of 'Gospel according to Saint Matthew,'"[3] an appellation which would imply numerous points of resemblance between this apocryphal document and our First Gospel.[4]

It is deeply to be regretted that this text should have disappeared, for the Fathers of the three first centuries esteemed it highly, and frequently made reference to it; it would have informed us as to what particular sayings and deeds of the Saviour appealed most touchingly to these Christian congregations; what form the preaching of the Good News insensibly assumed among them. To judge it by the quotations in the Fathers,[5] the sequence and arrangement of the narrative were much the same as in Saint Matthew and Saint Mark, but the relation of facts varied from them in details, these changes becoming more noteworthy, as, in process of time, the book was passed from hand to hand. Whereas the authority of the Apostles, as authors of the inspired writings, caused them to be treated with becoming respect, and insured their text from any alteration, the evangelical tales of the

[1] Thus the Syriac text is styled: Syria having been peopled by the descendants of Aram, son of Sem.

[2] S. Jerome, *De Vir. Ill.* 2–3; *Ad Mich.* vii. 2; *In Matt.* xii. 13; *Contr. Pelag.* iii. 1.

[3] Origen, *Hom. I in Luc.* S. Jerome, *In Matt. Præf.; Contr. Pelag.* iii. 1.

[4] According to all appearances, the Aramæan text of S. Matthew was the only one used by the mother church at the outset; but, little by little, the Nazarenes on the one side, and the Ebionites on the other, made so many additions to it that three distinct gospels, with one common foundation, were in circulation among the Jewish Christian churches: the authentic Aramæan version of S. Matthew in its integrity; the heretical gospel of the Ebionites; and that of the Nazarenes.

[5] Hilgenfeld gives a collection of them in his *Novum Testamentum extra Canonem receptum.*

Nazarenes suffered the frail destiny of every human and impersonal work. Under their present form, many of the fragments come down to us are scarcely any worthier of our confidence than the common run of apocryphal writings. In proof of this we need examine but one passage, that in which Jesus is represented as deciding to receive baptism at John's hands only in deference to the urgent appeals of His family.

"And, lo, the Mother of the Lord and his brethren said to Him: 'John is baptizing for the remission of sins; come, let us likewise go and receive his baptism.'

"But He saith unto them: 'Wherein have I sinned that I should go and be baptized by him, unless perchance I should have uttered something thro' ignorance?'"

The inspired Text has not the least hint either at any circumstances of the sort, or at any such offensive reservation; on the contrary it depicts Jesus as starting off from Galilee for the Jordan on his own initiative.[1]

Similar flights of fancy, just as devoid of probability, occur in the description of the Baptism. The Jordan takes fire at the Saviour's touch: "And thereupon," continues the apocryphal narrator, "as Jesus came up out of the stream, the Holy Ghost, outpoured in Its fulness, descended, rested upon Him, and said: My Son, of all the Prophets, Thou art He whom I have awaited, that I might rest upon Thee; for Thou art My rest, Thou art My first born Son who reigneth for everlasting." In Saint Matthew we read this simple story which bears on its face a very different stamp of genuineness: —

"And Jesus being baptized, forthwith came out of the water, and at the same time the heavens were opened to Him; He beheld the Spirit of God descending as a dove and coming upon Him. And behold a Voice coming from the heavens said: This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased."[2]

In this Gospel of the Nazarenes it is difficult to separate what properly belonged to it from what has been

[1] Matt. iii. 13–15. [2] Ibid., 16–17.

inserted therein by the Ebionites, a bastard branch of this same Church.[1] Evidently, the following saying, attributed to the Saviour, could only have been fabricated by these heretics. "Recently, my mother, the Holy Ghost seized me by one of the hairs of my head and transported me to the peak of Great Mount Thabor." Can we believe that churches so enlightened and even then under the guidance of Apostolic men could have accepted such wild imaginings as genuine? The Nazarene Gospel, therefore, as cited by the ancient Fathers, had not preserved its primitive integrity. Furthermore, even purged of its fables this production does not seem to have had the admirable simplicity of our inspired witnesses. Recall the touching picture in Saint Matthew of the wealthy young man departing from Jesus because he had great riches.[2] Here is how this incident is related in the Nazarenes' Gospel.

"One of the rich men said to Him: 'What good deed must one do to obtain life?'

"He answered him: 'O man, observe the Law and the Prophets.'

"'That have I done,' said the rich man.

"He replied: 'Go, sell all that thou possessest, distribute it among the poor, then come and follow Me.'

"The rich man began to scratch his head and found this saying little to his taste. Then the Lord went on:

[1] It is well to recall that the Ebionites claimed to be disciples of a certain heresiarch Ebion, whose existence is contested; they held that Jesus was the Messiah, but refused to admit his Divinity.

[2] "A certain one drawing nigh unto Him said: 'Good Master, what good shall I do that I may have life everlasting?' He answered him: 'Why dost thou call Me good? None is good save God alone. But, if thou wouldst enter into life, keep the Commandments.' 'Which commandments?' he asked. Jesus replied: 'Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Honor thy father and thy mother, and love thy neighbor as thyself.' The young man said to Him: 'All these have I kept from my youth; what is yet wanting to me?' Jesus answered: 'If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what you have and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have a treasure in Heaven; then come, and follow me.' The young man, hearing these words, went away very sad, for he had great possessions." Matt. xix. 16–22.

"'How canst thou say, "I have observed the Law and the Prophets," since it is written in the Law: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," and lo, what numbers of thy brethren, sons of Abraham, are covered with filth and dying of hunger, the while thy mansion is bursting with good things and absolutely nothing cometh forth from thence for them?' Then, turning toward Simon, His disciple, who was seated near Him, 'Simon, son of John,' he said to him, 'it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven.'"

Had the Gospel of the Nazarenes furnished only such additions to the inspired writings as these, the Fathers would not have been so fond of referring to it; but among the redundancies with which they overburthen the evangelical traditions, they do make mention of certain deeds, together with a few sayings of the Saviour, otherwise unknown and worthy of credence. "Be not happy," Jesus is represented as saying, "save when you look upon your brother in charity." Many minor incidents, omitted in the canonical Gospels, they saw fit to preserve: that the lintel of the great gate of the Temple broke at the death of the Saviour; that one of the high priest's servants was among the guards of the Sepulchre; this curious variant in the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our morrow's bread;" the plea of the man with the withered hand, imploring the Saviour's aid: "I was a mason, earning my livelihood with my hands; I beseech thee, Jesus, heal me, that I may no longer beg my bread in shame."

One of these fragments contains an account of the appearance of the risen Christ to Saint James, whereof no one of our four Evangelists makes any mention. Saint Paul alone alludes to it, merely in a passing word;[1] but the Christians of Jerusalem were naturally anxious to preserve any detail which had to do with their first Pastor; accordingly, their Gospel relates the precise circumstances surrounding this manifestation as follows: "When the Lord had given

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 7.

His shroud unto the servant of the high priest, He went to James and appeared unto him; for James, after having drunk of the chalice of the Lord, had sworn never to taste bread until he had beheld Jesus risen from the dead. . . . The Lord took bread, blessed and brake it, then gave thereof to James the Just, saying unto him, 'My brother, eat this bread which is due unto thee, for the Son of Man hath arisen from among them that sleep.'"

This scanty list of fragments[1] constitutes nearly all that is left us of the Nazarenes' Gospel. In these few unpolished sentences, there is nowhere any indication of the persistent reference to the Old Testament which is one of the characteristic features of Saint Matthew; but the likeness of the two works, — a likeness so striking that many of the Fathers considered them one and the same, — would lead us to believe that, on that point as in so many others, this production of the Nazarenes followed along the same lines as our First Gospel. In response to the longings of those for whose use it was intended, it would likewise devote itself to showing how that the Saviour was everywhere foretold and prefigured in the Ancient Covenant.

The holy books of Israel had ever been and still continued to be the chief spiritual food of the Judaizing Christians, who searched them as eagerly as they did the evangelical treasuries; for, in all alike, they found traces of their Lord. For this reason all were equally dear to them; accordingly, it would be difficult to conceive of their following the example of the Jewish Doctors, who, about this time, drew up a canon of the various Scriptures, or, like them, sacrificing a notable portion thereof. This sacred depository of the faith, which, since Esdras, had been in a continual process of formation, at this time comprised in their entirety the sum total of revelations vouchsafed under the Ancient Alliance. To the five

[1] Many scholars have edited them, among others: J. A. Fabricius, *Codex apocryphus Novi Testamenti*, i. 355. 2d ed. Hamburg, 1719. Hilgenfeld, *Novum Testamentum extra Canonem*, 15–17. Th. Than, *Geschichte des N. T. Kanons*, ii. pp. 685–704, etc.

books of Moses, the foundation and groundwork of the whole Old Testament, there had been added, under the name of the "First Prophets," Josuë, Judges, the four books of the Kings, Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel, and the twelve minor Prophets. The Psalms, hallowed by liturgic usage, were regarded as rightfully belonging to these. The general title *Ketoubim*, "Sacred Writings," was applied to the Holy Books, either of recent date or of an inspired character less hallowed by time.[1] The version of the Septuagint, made from copies transmitted to the Alexandrian Jews by the Rabbis of Palestine, settles the question as to what writings were held to be of divine origin in the schools of Judea about one century before the Christian era: it contains all the books the canonicity of which is admitted by the Church. It was this venerable collection which the scribes of Jabneh were not afraid to expurgate after the destruction of Jerusalem.

Their zeal exerted itself blindly. The Talmudic narratives tell us how that many were shocked by the general tone of Ecclesiastes, as well as by certain scenes in Proverbs and the Canticles;[2] how others laid stress upon certain alleged contradictions between Ezechiel and Moses.[3] Headstrong and opinionated as they were touching these subjects, they were destined to encounter adversaries of authority in their own collegiate body. Eleazar-Ben-Hanania, notably, proved himself competent to withstand them,[4] and to him is due a large share of the credit of having preserved the canon as it stands to-day in the Hebraic Bible. But even these men were without any heavenly mandate, nor had they the guidance of the Spirit which had enlightened the synagogue of old. Accordingly they went so far as to sacrifice many of the

[1] The books comprised under the name *Ketoubim* are: Proverbs, Job, Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Esdras, Nehemiah, and the Paralipomenons. Josephus (*Contr. Apion.* I.) gives a list of the canonical books, very similar to that of our Hebrew Bible.

[2] Rabbi Nathan, *Aboth*, chap. i. Mischna, *Eduïot*, v. 3. *Iadaïm*, iii. 5.

[3] Talmud of Babylon, *Hagiga*, 13 *a*. *Sifre* on Deuteronomy, 294.

[4] Ibid.

works wherein God had spoken and still speaks to the souls of men: Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the Maccabees, the last seven chapters of Esther; in Daniel, Azarias' Prayer, the Song of the children in the fiery furnace, the History of Susannah, and that of Bel and the Dragon.[1] Only note all that the Rabbis' blind criticism rejected: most moving tales, glorious pages from their nation's history, the work of one of their most eloquent Prophets, two sapiential books which for elevation of thought are the equals of Solomon's Proverbs, and in the wealth of instruction they contain far exceed them.

In the centuries past and gone the Doctors of Judea had taken good care that none should misuse and misunderstand the Word of God; 't was from them, as we have seen, that the Jews of Alexandria obtained these inspired pages. Nor is there any doubt that they had been equally recommended and accredited in the synagogues of Palestine. The Christians of Jerusalem had used them there, and carried them, together with the other Sacred Books, with them into their exile over beyond Jordan. The prejudices which led the Scribes of Jabneh astray, seem not to have disturbed these simple and sincere souls. Indifferent to, and as if unaware of, the condemnation of these books contained in their version, they continued to guard them reverently and thus rescued them from the oblivion to which a blind fanaticism had consigned them. For the reformers, indeed, were not content with merely forbidding the reading of them, they sought to destroy them, and would perhaps have succeeded, had not the Christian Church been there to save them, not only in Judea, but throughout the whole world, by adopting for its use the Septuagint version.

This notable portion of the Holy Books was not the sole prize gathered up by the converted Jews from the wreckage of their race. Deep down in their hearts there still remained, purified by faith, but ever beating true, the ancient dream of Israel: a vision of Righteousness trium-

[1] Daniel xiv.

phant here below, and a temporal kingdom of the Christ, their Chieftain, to be the prelude to His eternal victory.

This splendid hope made them cherish and preserve among the inspired writings, as of well-nigh equal rank, a number of apocryphal writings which depicted these glorious events and declared their speedy advent: the third and fourth books of the Maccabees, the Book of Henoch, etc. One by one the Church has dropped these books of uncertain origin from her canon; but during the first three centuries, her Doctors, even her Liturgy, did not hesitate to recur to them;[1] thus these also, though Jewish in their inception and spirit, owe their escape from destruction to Christian believers. Even to-day they initiate us into a complete sphere of ideas and fancies, wherein our fathers in the faith delighted to range, and which served, along with their Christian teachings, to nourish their piety. Nor is it in Palestine only that we find these Apocrypha held in high esteem; in Africa, in Gaul, everywhere throughout Christendom, the Fathers refer to them. Doubtless the inspired books of the Old Testament were ever esteemed by them as the real treasury of revelations anterior to the gospel; but, outside that Holy Ark, how many precious relics were to be discovered in the writings disowned by the unbelieving Jews! In all good faith, the Christians delved therein: had they not obtained them from the best of Israel's sons, from men who, they knew, were favorably inclined to their faith, nay, in many cases, had embraced it?

Mosaism, indeed, had not given birth to a mere body of Zionists, such as we have noted at Jabneh, picking the Law to pieces in their dry glossaries, reducing all religion to a system of casuistry whose sentences go to make up the Talmud. That was only the "Halaca," the "Way," which the Jew must follow if he would keep the observances. Side by side with these forced and fruit-

[1] For the quotations found in the Fathers and the Liturgy, taken from the fourth Book of Esdras, see Le Hir, *Études Bibliques*, vol. i. pp. 140 *et seq.* The Book of Henoch was equally renowned during the first centuries; S. Irenæus and Clement of Alexander were especially fond of quoting it.

less commentaries, there flourished the "Hagada," which drew its inspiration from the Prophets, the Psalms, all the poetical lore of the Bible. To these, men of high intelligence preferred to devote their attention, and from this ancient flame they borrowed a warmth and generous ardor which caused them in many ways to resemble their Christian brethren. Instinctively they shared the latter's feeling of loathing for the hypocritical Pharisees. As we have noted in Johanan's case, their main efforts were directed toward lightening the yoke of the Law, to making it bearable and attractive to the Gentiles, to lowering the barriers which the others were so bent on multiplying.

Thanks to this conformity of views, Hagadists and Jewish Christians gladly associated with one another in the multifarious dealings of daily life, and even in the synagogues. Together they went thither to pray and meditate. The bearers of the Good News took advantage of the freedom of speech granted to any and all present, and eagerly grasped this opportunity to preach Jesus, as "Author and Commentator" of the Law, as one likewise "of their belief."[1] This task demanded great prudence and deference, since the "*Teba*," the Chair, was as a rule occupied by Doctors who were hostile to this novelty; but, little though it was, some seed was planted and sprang up in this field. The Halachists, the head men and masters of the Palestine synagogues, were swift to take offence, and had recourse to the severest measures to prevent these efforts from bearing any fruit. Not content with branding such Israelites as received the gospel with the name of *Minim*, "Heretics,"[2] and silencing them summarily at their meetings, the instant an unwary word betrayed their character,[3] they went further and inserted in the Daily Prayer a threefold execration of the Jewish Christians. Without mentioning them by name, this anathema was so plainly levelled against them that none could mistake its object: —

[1] Hebr. xii. 2.
[2] S. Epiphanius, *Hæres*, xxix. 9. Talmud of Babylon, *Schabbath*, 116 *a*.
[3] Mischna, *Megilla*, iv. 9.

"May slanderers be left devoid of hope! May workers of iniquity be destroyed! rebels crushed! the power of money be humbled! Praise be unto thee, O Eternal, Who dost shatter Thine enemies and humble the haughty!" [1]

This prayer Christian believers could not repeat in concert with their brother Israelites without cursing themselves; they were forced to withdraw from the religious assemblies, as by degrees this addition to the Liturgy, perfidiously introduced by the Doctors of Jabneh, was passed on from one synagogue to another. Excluded from Jewish society, and, on the other hand, without any dealings with the Christian communities nearest them, which were animated by a very different spirit, these Jewish congregations were thrown entirely on their own resources; and yet, in their isolation, they clung as tenaciously to the gospel as they did to the Mosaical observances. To Hegesippus,[2] seeing how inviolate this Jewish branch of Christ's Church had kept the faith, it appeared "like a Virgin, altogether pure;" and indeed it merited this title by its fidelity to the essential truths of Christianity, but all the winning graces of virginity were lacking: here one can discover neither that noble zeal, at once tender and enthusiastic, nor the freedom of action, nor the lofty views which lent the other Christian societies of that period such a peculiar charm and made them so attractive to the Pagan world; in truth there was in this virgin Church naught of that fecund youth which is befitting the Bride of the Christ; the Spouse in whom there is no wrinkle or sign of wasting. Chilled and frozen by thus clinging to a dead Law, the Mother Church condemned herself to a life of inactivity and a childless death.

[1] The composition of this Anathema is attributed to R. Samuel the younger, who inserted it, at the behest of R. Gamaliel II., into the prayer which the Jews were supposed to recite thrice a day. This prayer was made up of eighteen benedictions; hence its name *Schemone Esre* (The Eighteen). The addition decreed by Gamaliel II. raised the number of its invocations to nineteen. *Berachot*, 28 *b*, *Megilla*, 17 *b*. In like manner the Fathers mention the maledictions uttered morning, noon, and night, against the Nazarenes, the *Minim*. S. Epiphanius, *Hæres*, xxix. 9. S. Jerome, *In Isai.*, v. 18–19; xlix. 7; l. ii. 4 *et seq.*

[2] Hegesippus quoted by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, iii. xxxii.).

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH AND THE EMPIRE UNDER THE FLAVIANS.

God had made use of the Flavians to chastise the Jews. They merited, in a way, this their mandate as high executioners, by the natural virtues which thereafter they had occasion to display in the administration of the Empire.

It was high time that the government fell into clean and sturdy hands, for popular disorders threatened to engulf it altogether. The two years succeeding Nero's death had witnessed a threefold repetition of outbreaks whereby Rome must needs expiate her guilt for having applauded Cæsar's madness, in her own life blood.[1] What had become of that city burned and rebuilt by him to suit his wanton pleasure? Again sword and fire had devastated it. When Vespasian's soldiers entered there they beheld the Capitol in flames and fifty thousand corpses heaped up in the streets.[2] A similar state of anarchy reigned in the provinces and along the frontier. Fighting was going on in Asia, in Africa, in the three Gauls; Dacians and Sarmatians were ravaging the border lands of the Danube: not a vestige remained of the "Roman Peace," so imposingly effective under Augustus. It is to the glory of Vespasian that he restored it forthwith,[3] and confirmed it, not by means of the unstable

[1] "Civilia bella . . . omnes provincias exercitusque lustraverant, velut expiato terrarum orbe." Tacitus, *Hist.*, iv. 3.

[2] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, l. iv. xi. 4. *Dio Cassius*, lxv. 19. Tacitus, *Hist.*, iii. 82, 84.

[3] Suetonius, *Vespasian*, 8. "Exsanguem diu, fessumque terrarum orbem brevi refecit." Aurelius Victor, *De Cæsar*, 9.

royal prerogative, sometimes beneficent, more often of ill omen, but by the ancient authority of the Senate. There was urgent need to rehabilitate this body, weakened by a century of bloody proscriptions, by its own dissensions, and its servility. The Emperor expelled every one who appeared to him unworthy, and summoned thither a thousand Italian or provincial families to reanimate it by an infusion of fresh blood.[1] This reform, while it was a measure of present safety, was at the same time a preparation for the future; to it the Empire owes its happiest days, the reign of the Antonines.

The Treasury, looted by Nero, was in no less need of reconstruction.[2] Vespasian rearranged the raising of taxes, and oversaw their outlay so closely that he acquired the reputation of being a miser.[3] The plebeian class, accustomed to imperial pomp, always evidenced their ill-feeling toward any one who tightened the purse-strings instead of overwhelming them with regal alms. The outcry was all the louder since Vespasian did not trouble himself to consult the feelings of the army. No source of revenue was neglected; no money, no matter whence its issue, "seemed unsavory in his nostrils."[4] This slur and many similar gibes wherein his finicky critics ridiculed him, in no wise detract from the glory of the work done.[5] The taxes, regularly collected and immediately circulated throughout the whole Empire, served to rebuild the rapidly accumulating ruins: the highways, bridges, aqueducts, city walls, and temples, which had

[1] Suetonius, *loc. cit.* Aurelius Victor, *De Cæsar*, 9.

[2] Vespasian estimated the cost of a complete restoration at one thousand millions. "Quadragies millies opus esse, ut republica staret;" ten thousand millions is another reading: "Quadragenties millies." Suetonius, *Vesp.*, 16.

[3] Suetonius, ibid.

[4] "Reprehendenti filio Tito, quod etiam urinae vestigal commentus esset, pecuniam ex prima pensione admovit ad nares, suscitans num odore, offenderetur." Suetonius, *Vesp.*, 23.

[5] "Tot tantaque brevi confecta prudentiam magis quam avaritiam probavere." Aur. Vict., *De Cæsar*, 9. John of Antioch and Suidas. (*Fragmenta Historiæ Grec.*, iv. p. 578, ed. Didot) speak of him quite favorably: the testimony of Suetonius should therefore be received with a considerable amount of doubt. *Vesp.*, 16.

fallen or were fast tumbling down. Not content with restoring the Capitol in all its pristine splendor, he designed, right in the heart of the city, the most colossal amphitheatre as yet conceived by Roman genius, and constructed it so massively that to this day its huge framework overawes the beholder: eighty-seven thousand people could find seating-places within it.

But he was much more absorbed in providing for the people's wants than for their amusements. An architect proposed to transport some immense columns for the Capitol at small cost to him. "My first duty is to provide food for the poor," he answered, and he dismissed him with a reward for his invention.[1] Still other incidents reveal the high-toned and discriminating temperament of the man: one trait especially, too seldom a characteristic of great men, his love of truth;[2] his gratitude he proved by his deeds and put his beliefs in practice. When they tried to dissuade him from nominating as consul a man to whom the stars had foretokened the Imperial throne, he replied, "If he becomes Emperor, he will remember that I was good to him."[3] Nor did the possession of absolute powers act as a blight on his integrity. What his lowly birth, rough experiences, and the soldier's discipline had made him, that he remained to the end, — a simple, upright man, after the olden pattern, sober, sparing, and so wrapt up in his tasks that he would work far into the night. His last words have a ring of the sublime: "An Emperor ought to die on his feet." In the last pangs of death he struggled to raise himself, and in that effort passed away.[4]

He died with a tranquil soul as concerned Rome and the world, bequeathing it to Titus. This Prince was clothed with the Imperial powers in his ripe maturity, strengthened by the experience gained in his father's company, sated by the pleasures that had tempted his younger

[1] Suetonius, *Vesp.*, 18.
[2] "Patientissimus veri." Tacitus, *De Orator.*, 8.
[3] Suetonius, *Vesp.*, 14.
[4] Id. ibid., 24.

days. Whereupon, not satisfied with having cut loose from his past, he proved that he was "master of himself as well as of the universe," by sacrificing for the people's good his passion for Berenice. The beautiful Jewess had followed him from Palestine to Rome, counting upon the strength of his attachment for her to impel him to marry her. Some say that Titus had pledged himself to her.[1] However that may be, she continued to live with him as though assured of an eventual union, residing in the palace and wielding royal prerogatives over the court, by virtue of her lavish style of living, her all-powerful influence, and the favors she bestowed so adroitly. Nevertheless, the Romans were enraged at the prospect of a Jewess ascending the throne. Ever since Vespasian's accession, the mutterings had been audible. Finally two Cynics became their spokesmen and were so bold as to insult the pair of lovers in the presence of the whole theatre. The Flavians, with their wonted clemency, had merely ordered the foremost of the two offenders to be flogged; but on finding that his example was becoming contagious, they had his accomplice sentenced to death.[2] But legal penalties can only repress outbreaks of popular feeling; the bitterness remains. The Prince perceived that he could not allay it save by parting from Berenice. He decided immediately to do so and dismissed her from the Court, "despite himself, and in her despite."[3] Though once forcibly removed thence, she tried anew to regain a foothold there at the very beginning of Titus' reign; but he withstood all her blandishments, resolved thereafter to devote himself with a single heart to his duties, to the Empire[4] the peace and protection of which had been confided to his care.

Never was such zeal for the public welfare more needed than at that juncture, for calamities had visited every quarter. In the year 80, a conflagration raged in the city during three days and three nights; the districts

[1] Suetonius, *Titus*, 5.
[2] Dio Cassius, lxvi. 15.
[3] "Berenicen statim ab urbe dimisit, invitus invitam." Suetonius, *Titus*, v.
[4] Dio Cassius, ibid. Aurelius Victor, epit. x. 5.

around the Capitol and the Pantheon were destroyed.[1] At the same time a famine was ravaging the whole world, like a fearsome plague; everywhere earthquakes were terrifying the people.[2] The crater of Vesuvius, long supposed to be extinct, broke forth afresh, burying the surrounding towns in lava and ashes.[3] Titus repaired these disasters with untiring munificence; when he had emptied the Treasury, he bade them sell the furnishings of his palace. This generosity was native to his character, but he made it a principle of his daily life, giving ear to every just demand, and declaring that day lost which did not witness the bestowal of some largess. "It ill behooves a sovereign," he said, "to send away any one dissatisfied." His bountifulness toward the common people was quite as noteworthy; his own private baths were thrown open to them, and the festivals, which he knew they were so passionately fond of, made more frequent. At the dedication of the Coliseum the sports lasted one hundred days, with five thousand wild beasts employed in them.

This policy, furthermore distinguished by the dignity of his private life, won all men's hearts; only certain of his councillors were alarmed by it, fearing lest it weaken his power. They had no need to dread any lack of stern authority in the conqueror of Jerusalem; of this he gave ample proof by his severity toward that pest of the preceding reigns, the Informers. Not content with denying them a hearing, he pursued them remorselessly, ordering them to be flogged in the open Forum, sentencing them to banishment or penal servitude.[4]

A reign like his was indeed too good to last; after only twenty-six months the world must needs bemoan the demise of Titus. Out of her gratitude Rome decorated him with the finest title that ever decked the memory of man: "the Joy of the human race."[5] This time it would seem

[1] Dio Cassius, lxvi. 24. Suetonius, *Titus*, 8.
[2] Dio Cassius, ibid.
[3] Pliny, *Epist.*, vi. 16, 20. Suetonius, ibid. Dio Cassius, ibid.
[4] Suetonius, *Titus*, 7, 8.
[5] "Titus . . . amor ac deliciæ generis humani." Suetonius, *Titus*, 1. Aurelius Victor, *De Cæsar*, 10, 6.

that the apotheosis, too often a lying flattery, was but an act of justice; nor have succeeding ages diminished its lustre one whit. In the fifth century, Saint Augustine re-echoes it, asserting that the Church, too, had revered "Vespasian and his son as the kindliest of Cæsars." [1]

Whence did the Flavians derive the noble instincts which lifted them so far above their predecessors? In the first instance and in great part, from their stock and antecedents, far healthier than the Roman patriarchate. Sprung from a Sabine family, Vespasian was endowed with all their thrifty honesty, the vigorous spirit and the steadfastness in labor, which distinguished him. A toil-some life, spent in military camps and proconsulate duties, tempered these native qualities; but the relations contracted by both the Flavians with Judea contributed most to refine them. Indeed we have noticed how, even when hunting down the rebellious Israelites to the last man, Vespasian and Titus had yielded to the charming character of that race, so hateful when led astray by vile passions, yet by nature winning and attractive to the last degree. The rehabilitated Jews that thronged into the Roman camp constituted a court as pleasant as it was distinguished: in the foremost ranks stood Agrippa II. with his sister Berenice, in the first full bloom of her beauty; the neighboring princes of Syria, more or less affiliated to Mosaism; the Jewish Prefect of Syria, Tiberius Alexander; the historian Josephus. If we are to believe the personage last named, the Flavians did not stop at entertaining intimate relations with certain chosen spirits among his countrymen; they expressed a desire to study their friends' faith and were given their sacred books to read; so struck were they with the lofty teachings they discovered therein that they never mentioned them save in terms of deepest respect.

Once become masters of the world, the two princes in no wise altered their conduct, for they repaired to Rome with the same personages in their train to whom, during

[1] "Vespasianis, vel patri vel filio, suavissimis imperatoribus." S. Aug., *De Civ. Dei*, v. 21.

their four years' stay in Syria, they had grown to be so deeply attached. Could Vespasian forget that Tiberius Alexander had been the first to have him proclaimed supreme ruler by the latter's troops in Egypt;[1] that, from the very first, Herod Agrippa had devoted himself, body and soul, to his cause? Both these men continued to enjoy the Imperial favor in the new court. The statues raised to Tiberius Alexander in the Forum prove the exalted rank he had been raised to by the gratitude of Vespasian;[2] for his part Agrippa had been invested with the prætorship[3] and received an enlargement of his domains in the region lying about Hermon.[4] Yet why need he leave Rome and its pleasure for this far-off realm? He was content to exercise his legal rights and to issue coinage at Tiberias and at Paneas,[5] while hardly ever appearing there in person. At Rome he led a fine life, associating with its great men, yet punctilious in his observance of the Law, even displaying a certain ostentation in celebrating the festivals of Israel.[6] Old Rome grumbled at this intrusion of Judaism into its social circles; for a long while, knowing that it was countenanced by the Imperial favor, none durst oppose it, but when it looked as if Titus were likely to marry a Jewess, the storm burst all bounds. Yet even after Berenice's dismissal, her fellow-countrymen's lot was as enviable as ever. Agrippa and his other sister, Drusilla, with their attendant train, the minor kings of Syria who were adherents of Mosaism, all continued to frequent the palace and cut an important figure there. So powerful was their influence that the Jews fairly flocked into Rome; nowhere else, now that Jerusalem had fallen, were they more assured of protection.

Of lower rank, but not less influential than the princely

[1] "Initium ferendi ad Vespasianum imperii Alexandriæ cœptum, festinante Tiberio Alexandro, qui Kalendis Juliis sacramento ejus legiones adegit." Tacitus, *Hist.*, ii. 79. Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, l. iv. x. 6.

[2] Juvenal, i. 129, 131.

[3] Dio Cassius, lxvi. 15.

[4] Justus of Tiberias, in Photius, *Bibliotheca*, cod. 33.

[5] Madden, *Coins of the Jews*, pp. 139–169.

[6] Juvenal, v. 179–184.

descendants of Herod, was the historian Josephus. He had been brought, either as prisoner or refugee, into Vespasian's camp, where we have seen how speedily he won favor with the princes. When, during the siege of Jerusalem, Titus noticed that he was more loyal to the conquerors than to the conquered, he struck up an intimate friendship with him; on their return to Rome they were more inseparable than ever. The forename Flavius, which Josephus then assumed, proves that he considered himself as belonging to the Imperial "Family." It was under these conditions that the former defender of Jotapata began to write the books which have made him more illustrious than his warlike exploits. His work is extensive and of deep interest to us, since, outside the facts, which speak for themselves, it gives us the viewpoint from which the Imperial court of that day regarded Judaism; consequently it tells what influence was wielded over the masters of the Empire by the divine Law and that chosen race which had but lately given birth to the world's Saviour.

Certain erroneous accounts of the Jewish war first moved Josephus to undertake his earliest work. He wrote it under the very eyes and with the aid of the principal actors in that tragedy: — Vespasian, Titus, Agrippa.[1] The seventy-two letters written to him by the last named personage during the composition of the work are proof sufficient of the attention he gave to it. The officers who had fought in Judea were interrogated, and helped to complete the notes taken by Josephus in the course of the campaign. The order of events and the minor incidents were thus carefully verified; but the historian was too much of a courtier not to give his narrative a coloring which would flatter his patrons. So, then, whenever the honor of the Flavians and his own personal interests are in question, it behooves us to exercise considerable reserve. Everywhere else he merits our perfect confidence, for none was so well circumstanced as

[1] Josephus, *Contra Apionem*, i. 9; *Vita*, 65.

he to draw a correct picture of poor fanatical and expiring Judea.

A Levite by birth, educated in the Rabbinical schools, at the age of thirteen he had mastered their entire system of learning. He became successively a Pharisee,[1] a Sadducee, an Essene, then he took refuge in Mysticism and spent three years in the Desert, under the tutelage of the hermit Bannus.[2] Many men, models of holiness like Moses and Elias, in similar seasons of retreat had been vouchsafed a clear conception of their calling in life together with the strength to pursue it. Whether or not it was their example that led Josephus to retire into solitude, he lacked the grace needful to reap the fruits thereof, the virtue of a perfect detachment from earthly things, a whole-hearted sacrifice of himself to God. He came forth with his natural instincts only more keenly developed. His bravery had waxed greater; likewise his ascendency over his fellow-men: of this the Romans had ample proof during the expedition into Galilee. On the other hand, in character he remained as mediocre as of old, bent on making his fortune, egoistical and vain; his intellect more subtle and insinuating than ever, more ambitious for worldly success than intent on personal honesty and honor. He possessed only the positive attributes of the Jew; none of those lofty virtues which exalt Israel whensoever God's breath arouses it, as in the time of the Christ. Sprung from a semi-sceptical aristocracy Josephus bears its imprint, and in his works is less intent on setting forth the divine mission of his race than on laying stress upon its nobility, its fine doctrines and institutions.

These native dispositions were further developed in the Imperial palace, by intercourse with its scholars, for whom there was no world outside of Greece and Rome.

[1] The Pharisees cannot properly be called a distinct sect. The name is used rather to designate men of all parties who were fanatics in matters pertaining to the law, and the abetters of useless practices.

[2] Josephus, *Vita*, i. 2; *Bell. Jud.*, Preface 1; *Antiq. Jud.*, 1, l. xvi. vii. 1.

For what were the humble annals of Judea beside the glorious history of Sparta and Athens, in the eyes of a sovereign people extending their conquests to the confines of the known universe? And were there really any more of these Jews whom they had just crushed out of existence? In his supreme contempt for them, Tacitus is simply re-echoing the fashionable tone at Rome. It is well known what a mass of silly calumnies mars the fundamental truthfulness of his work: "They regard as profane," he asserts, "everything which we hold sacred, . . . as lawful everything we abhor, . . . Their rites are sinister, infamous, invented by the deepest depravity. . . . Contempt of the gods, renunciation of patriotism, neglect of parents, children, brethren, these are the first principles they inculcate in their followers."[1]

The story of the war offered Josephus an opportunity of rehabilitating his own and his fellow-countrymen's fair fame; he was not slow to grasp it, and, to insure its being read by all, made a Greek translation of his work, originally written in Hebrew.[2] True to his purpose of dispelling popular prejudices, he reminds his readers that the revolting scenes of excesses were enacted solely by a horde of fanatics, the outcasts of the Holy City. The real body of the nation, though at first overmastered by them, lost no time in shaking off the yoke of their tyranny. Thereafter — to this the leaders of the expedition would bear him witness — all such as were accounted wise and good by their fellow-countrymen, went over to the Romans and remained faithful to them. These were the rightful representatives of the real Jewish people, a race as illustrious as any known to history, justly proud of its pure doctrines, its Law, its God, that almighty God to whom the conquerors owed their victories.

Did this plea *pro domo sua* win over those whom it was intended to convince? It would seem highly improbable, since thenceforth, as formerly, historians and

[1] Tacitus, *Hist.*, v. 5.

[2] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, Preface 1.

poets and moralists are never tired of harassing the Jews, while very shortly we shall see, not only writers, but statesmen treating them as foes. At the court of the Flavians, however, public opinion was more kindly disposed toward them. On the whole, the idea of Judaism which Josephus seeks to propagate may well pass for that which Vespasian and his son professed themselves. The tolerance they manifested toward the dispersed nation after its disasters would lead us to infer that they shared his sentiments. Titus openly testified to this by signing with his own hand the copy of the *Jewish War* presented to him;[1] thereby he attested the truth of the narrative and approved its tone. Consequently Josephus appeals to his sovereign's own avowal when he represents him as being inspired and powerfully aided in his victories by the God of the Jews; likewise when he recalls the respect Titus evinced for the Temple, which he strove to safeguard at all hazards; and the consideration and esteem he showed for the real children of Israel.

The conduct of the latter, not only at Rome, but in all the large cities of the Empire, could not but confirm the Flavians in these kindly dispositions. Outside of a few fanatics, whom they were forced to repress here and there, they recognized the fact that the Jews had everywhere proven themselves loyal subjects, respectful toward their lawful superiors, inoffensive in politics, silent concerning their observances, and representing their religion solely as a sublime philosophy. With no fear of their disturbing the peace, Vespasian and Titus could consequently give free rein to their sympathies for them.

Like favors were extended to the Christians also, and for analogous reasons. They, too, when threatened by the Zealots at Jerusalem, had fled from their tyranny.[2] It was noted that they were everywhere esteemed as quiet-loving citizens, never involved in political intrigues,

[1] Josephus, *Vita*, 65.
[2] See *The Last Years of Saint Paul*, chap. xiv.

preaching obedience to the Romans and praying for them. From the Holy Books, which they held in common with the Jews, they had extracted the spirit, regarding as superfluous those forms of worship and conduct which were but intended to foreshadow a far freer future. Their innocence, which had not always availed to protect them, now assured the same tolerant treatment to the Christians as to the Israelites, from whom, to the average Pagan, they were scarcely distinguishable. At the court of the Flavians the Jews did not, as yet, demean themselves by vilifying them, as throughout the East the sectaries of their race had done. It will be recalled with what gracious curiosity Agrippa and Berenice had listened to Saint Paul's sermon, wherein he told how a renewal of the Law had been foretold by Moses and the Prophets.[1] Josephus' leanings were along similar lines, and this tendency of his was so well known that some one felt that he might risk the insertion into one of his books, *The Jewish Antiquities*, of the following eulogy of the Saviour: "About this time appeared Jesus, a wise man, if it be permitted to call him a man, for he performed wondrous prodigies, and was the master of such as love the truth. Many Jews and Greeks came to him: he was the Christ. He was accused by the head men of our nation and crucified by Pilate; but those that had clung to him did not forsake him, for he appeared unto them, having come to life again on the third day. This miracle and many other similar ones had been foretold of him by the divine Prophets. The sect which, from him, has taken the name of Christians exists to this day." The forgery is self-evident; Josephus could never have written these lines. Some Christian copyist, considering his testimony to the Saviour's existence too meagre, has distorted its original sense; but this interpolation could only have been rendered possible by the existence of some passage at this point in the *Antiquities* wherein the author spoke of Jesus in terms of respect.[2] The other passages,

[1] Acts xxvi.

[2] My only reason for giving this passage is the importance so long

in which he describes the death of Saint John the Baptist, and that of Saint James, are very probably authentic; they all go to show that the Christian belief was neither unknown nor hateful to him.

For this the Church has ever been becomingly grateful to him. His writings were always preserved, as carefully reproduced as the Holy Books themselves; and for very good reason, since they furnish us with a supplement to certain parts of the Bible. For the Old Testament Josephus gives a history of periods omitted therein, with an explanation of observances there only summarily set forth; as for the New, his assistance is of priceless value. Thanks to him, things which the Evangelists and Apostles merely allude to in passing become real and living objects. Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, are no longer mere names without any apparent reality; we know what doctrines they professed, what passions agitated them. The leaders of the sacerdotal aristocracy, the Scribes of great renown, the Herods, who held sway over this epoch, are portrayed to us by him with all the details concerning their conduct of life. The land of Judea, now lying waste and arid, lives afresh in the pictures he paints of it, as it was when Jesus lived there and loved it so; Jerusalem in all its glory, Samaria, Galilee, Genesareth, fruitful and populous, with rich harvest fields and bosky glades. Josephus did not finish this canvas until Domitian's day; but his first work on the "Jewish War" confirms in its every feature the divine threats launched against the once Holy, but guilt-stained, City. The historian's narrative offers such conclusive testimony that, handed down all through the ages, it has never ceased to corroborate the Gospel.

Its influence became manifest at once, and in that very

attributed to it. From Eusebius down to the sixteenth century none ventured to question its authenticity; but thereafter a majority of the critics were agreed as to its unlikelihood. Some reject it as wholly suppositious; others, apparently with more justice, admit that in the primitive text Josephus probably spoke of Jesus, but that some Christian copyist altered his phraseology to a greater or less extent. Ewald, *Geschichte des Volkes Israël*, vol. v. pp. 181–186. Paret, in Herzog's *Real Encyclopædia*, vii. 27–29, etc.

palace where Josephus was writing. It is true that Christian ideas never obtained anything more than a respectful toleration from Vespasian and Titus; but we know positively that they penetrated efficaciously into the lateral branch of their family whose head was Flavius Sabinus. This brother of Vespasian, as Prefect of Rome in the year 64,[1] had been forced by his official position to play a part in the Neronian persecution. Did the heroism displayed by the martyrs incline him to admire, if not to embrace, their faith? One is well-nigh tempted to believe so on beholding this man, after thirty-five glorious campaigns,[2] and while occupying one of the highest posts in the Empire, discarding all worldly ambitions and only seeking to end his days in obscurity.[3] Whatever may be the truth as regards Sabinus, so far as his descendants are concerned there is no room for doubt possible. Before the eyes and in the estimation of all men, his son, Titus Flavius Clemens, as well as the wife of the latter, Flavia Domitilla, lived and died as Christians.

Illustrious though they were, little was known of the daily life of these two converts: the great people of Rome, who gave in their adherence to Christianity, could not preserve their faith otherwise than by keeping apart from a corrupt and corrupting world. It behooved them, if they would keep their souls unspotted, to avoid the circuses and the theatres and well-nigh all the festivals; a like abstinence was imperative as regards civil and religious duties which were surrounded by idolatrous rites.[4] The man of high rank who gave himself to the Christ, by

[1] Borghesi, Works, vol. iii. pp. 327 *et seq.*

[2] Tacitus, *Histor.*, iii. 75.

[3] His contemporaries attributed this change to Sabinus' horror of bloodshed, and to the enfeeblement of a mind hitherto strong and hardy. "In fine vitæ, alii segnem, multi moderatum, et civium sanguinis parcum credidere." Tacitus, *loc. cit.*

[4] "The Cæsars," says Tertullian, "would have become Christians could they have been at once Christians and Cæsars." This is the very difficulty reported by missionaries to China, where the question of "rites," prohibited by the Church, is the principal obstacle to the conversion of the educated classes. Cf. *Histoire des relations de la China avec les puissances occidentales*, vol. iii. by H. Cordier.

that very fact devoted himself to a life of seclusion; for him, if not a necessity, it was at least a dictate of the highest prudence to decline all honors, — an act of self-sacrifice easily made by men whose souls were sickened by the depravity they saw about them, and, on the other hand, so filled with the love of God that they had no room left for earthly things. But we can fancy the contempt displayed toward them by Pagan society, utterly powerless to conceive of such saintly self-abnegation. What they most bitterly censured in Clemens was his indifference, when placed in a position where he could have aspired to anything on earth, for in their eyes ambition is the sign manual of a manly mind. This disinterestedness so far as public offices was concerned they regarded as a cowardly desertion of a public trust. "Clemens," says Suetonius, "made himself contemptible by his lack of energy."[1]

The elder branch of the Flavian family was not the sole target for such unjust slurs; soon we shall see how, during the persecution inaugurated by Domitian, many other personages perished under the same accusations. So, then, a noteworthy group of Christians had grown up in the very midst of the Roman Aristocracy, and encouraged by the tolerant spirit of the Cæsars practised their faith freely. As has been said, there was little to distinguish them from the Jews on whom the Mosaic observances imposed the same conduct of life, the same aloofness from society. "All these people lead a Jewish life,"[2] men said, and society turned its back on them as on any other exasperating caste.

The main thing for them was to take care that this antipathy should not rearouse actual hostility. Under Vespasian and Titus, this peril seemed banished, at least from Rome. Naught was left of Nero save his legacy of hatred: the persecuting edict of 64 which still survived.[3]

[1] "Contemptissimæ inertiæ." Suetonius, *Domit.*, 15.

[2] "Judaïcam vivere vitam." Ibid., 12. Cf. Dio Cassius, lxvii. 14; lxviii. 1.

[3] "Permansit, erasis omnibus, hoc solum institutum neronianum." Tertullian, *Ad. Nat.*, 1, 7.

It is possible, therefore, that by appealing to the text of this law the fanaticism of some city or the caprice of some governor may have culminated in a few bloody executions throughout the provinces. Probably it was under some such circumstances that his indignation led Saint Hilary to inscribe Vespasian's name on the same roll of dishonor with those of Decius and Nero.[1] The imputation, supported by his testimony solely, is certainly unwarranted, for no one can point to a single measure taken by the Flavians against Christianity; while, on the other hand, we have positive knowledge that at Rome it enjoyed perfect liberty under them.

One of the most striking witnesses to their own sense of security is the general aspect of their burial-grounds. From the very first, indeed, the Christians had owned their own cemeteries: the longing to await the Resurrection in a common resting-place once awakened in their hearts, the Patricians among their members had gladly procured them this consolation. In after centuries the catacombs were forced to burrow underground to conceal the martyrs' bodies and their secret gatherings from their persecutors: in Vespasian's times such precautions are unknown. The sepulchres stand above ground, in plain sight of every one,[2] clearly indicating, by their emblems and their epitaphs, that they enclose Christian remains.[3]

A mortuary domain once belonging to the Flavians

[1] S. Hilary, *Contra Arianos*, 3. M. Paul Allard considers "it more than probable that Vespasian's name is mentioned here by oversight, in place of that of his son Domitian." *Histoire des Persécutions*, p. 85, n. 1. It is true that the two pontiffs who governed the Roman Church during their reigns, SS. Linus and Cletus, are given by the *Liber Pontificalis* the title of martyrs; but, according to all appearances, that was a purely gratuitous attribution, since there is no other tradition to indicate that they shed their blood in the cause, and it is most unlikely that at a time when the Christians of Rome were enjoying untrammelled freedom, they alone, the heads of the community, should have been executed.

[2] Signor de Rossi, *Bullettino di Archeologia cristiana*, 1865, p. 94.

[3] The earliest Christian inscription, the date of which is fixed positively, belongs to the time of Vespasian (71). Others, taken from the catacombs of Lucina, Priscilla, Domitilla, and the Ostian Cemetery, would seem to go back to the same epoch. See Paul Allard, *Histoire des Persécutions*, p. 86.

and recently discovered is a striking instance in point.[1] From among the humbler tombs of clients and freedmen, one easily distinguishes the monument erected for this illustrious family: its broad approaches, the richness of its construction, the interior decorations, are all worthy of note. A large lobby, especially, along which rest the sarcophaguses exhibits several charming landscapes carefully painted on its walls: fishing scenes, lambs browsing in the shade. A vine tapestries the vault, with birds and winged spirits sporting amid its fruit and foliage. The serenity of those peaceful days wherein the artist did his work is reflected in this composition; but that the painter was a Christian, or at least that he painted for Christians, is evident from the fact that, among profane subjects, he introduces Biblical episodes and the emblems of our faith: Daniel in the Lions' den; the Eucharistic Table, whereon bread and fish, symbolic of the Saviour,[2] are offered to the guests. The inscriptions unearthed on this estate declare that it belonged to a granddaughter of Vespasian, Flavia Domitilla.[3] When converted to Christianity she had turned this necropolis of her family into a Christian cemetery. The same is true of the other catacombs which date back to this same period: that of Priscilla, on the Salarian Road, which the noble house of Pudens presented to its lowly brethren in the faith; on the Ostian Highway, that of a matron named Lucina, who probably is none other than the celebrated patrician lady who was one of the first-fruits of the gospel, Pomponia Græcina.[4] In these several places of sepulture Christians were at perfect liberty to manifest

[1] This burying-place was discovered in 1865 near the *Via Ardeatina*, Rossi, *Roma sotterranea*, vol. i. p. 131, etc.; 186, 265, etc.; 319–321; *Bullettino*, 1865, 1874, 1875.

[2] It will be recalled that a fish was chosen as an emblem of the Christ because the word in Greek, ΙΧΘΥΣ, is spelled by the initials of the five words, Ἰησοῦς, Χριστὸς, Θεοῦ, Υἱὸς, Σώτηρ, Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour.

[3] "Ex indulgentia Flaviæ Domitillæ." Orelli, *Henzen*, 5422. "Flaviæ Domitillæ . . . Vespasiani neptis ejus beneficio hoc sepulchrum meis libertis libertatibus posui." Id., 5423.

[4] See *Saint Peter and the First Years of Christianity*, chap. xviii.

their beliefs openly, and made good use of the opportunity.

This generous forbearance was doubly grateful to the Church of Rome, then just emerging from the horrible scenes of persecution which had overwhelmed her. It was needed to revivify what little life was left in her, to collect her scattered members, and by numerous conversions to infuse new blood into her veins. This was to be the task of the pastors who succeeded the Prince of the Apostles, Saint Linus and Saint Cletus. Each in turn, according to the Pontifical Catalogues, occupied the Seat of Peter for a half-score of years.[1] "Linus" is a slave's name[2] and would seem to indicate that the first Pontiff, chosen to fill the place of the Galilean fisherman, like him had risen from the lowest strata of society. This was the providential decree: "God choosing what is basest, and most contemptible in the world's eyes, and that which is naught, to do away with that which is, that no man should glory in His sight."[3] We have witnessed how Linus supported Paul on the eve of his martyrdom, and, through him, in the second letter to Timothy sends his greetings to that disciple.[4] Outside of these authentic facts, all that tradition tells us of his pontificate is that he maintained the order and the rules established by Saint Peter; notably that, as the Apostle had ordained, he bade the women veil their heads on entering the church.[5]

Even less is known concerning the life of his successor. He was called *Anencletus*, Anacletus, according to some; *Cletus* or Clete, according to others. The common opinion nowadays is that these two names, in fact, designate one and the same person.[6] The former, which, again

[1] P. de Smedt, *Dissertationes selectæ, Dissert. VII de Chronotax Roman. Pontific.*, Art. III. Lightfoot, *S. Clement*, vol. i. pp. 201–345, *Early Roman Succession*.

[2] Mgr. Duchesne, *Liber Pontificalis*.

[3] 1 Cor. i. 28–29.

[4] 2 Tim. iv. 21.

[5] "His ex prompto beati Petri constituit ut mulier in ecclesiam velato capite introiret." *Liber Pontificalis*, Duchesne, vol. i. p. 121.

[6] Cf. P. de Smedt, *op. cit. Dissert.* vii. Art. 1: Utrum Cletus diversus sit ab Anacleto. Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers, S. Clement*, vol. i. p. 80–81.

would seem to befit only a slave or freedman, was probably the one he first bore.[1] But as this name, meaning "Blameless"[2] doubtless seemed too high sounding in the ears of a humble disciple of the Apostles, he changed it to *Cletus*, "the Called, the Elect" of the Lord.[3]

Just the opposite of these two pontiffs, Clement, who succeeded them, stands forth in the full light of history, owing to his growing ascendency outside of Rome and to his writings, which we shall shortly examine. He, too, had some taste of this period of calm and prosperity, since Domitian did not launch his edict of persecution until the year 95. The peace enjoyed by Jews and Christians alike dates from the death of Nero. It lasted nearly thirty years, — a season of respite which God vouchsafed His Church, that she might make good her losses, and regain fresh life and strength; thus could she face martyrdom erect and steadfast.

[1] *Corpus Inscriptionum Latin.*, iii. 6220; v. 8110, 40.
[2] "'Ανεγκλητος."
[3] "Κλητός." Cf. Παύλος . . . κλητὸς ἀπόστολος. Rom. i. 1 and 1 Cor. i. 1.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PERSECUTION UNDER DOMITIAN.

Was Titus poisoned? The grief-stricken Romans were fain to believe so, and they had had a wide experience in the matter of Imperial takings-off. Rumor accused Domitian,[1] his brother and co-heir with him to the throne. That he was insanely jealous and capable of committing any crime to obtain the crown was well known; Vespasian had good reasons for refusing him any share in the affairs of State.[2] Had they not seen him, in unseemly haste, quit Titus' deathbed and rush for the Prætorian camp to have himself proclaimed there as Emperor?[3] Everything about the man tended to arouse their suspicions, and yet no positive proof has come down to us to confirm his guilt; the best informed of his contemporaries agree in acquitting him of the charge of fratricide,[4] with which the populace, ever prone to suspect some secret crime, had taxed him. Accordingly, at the opening of his reign, people were prepared for any exhibition of severity; the intriguing, crafty spirit he had evidenced under Vespasian and Titus, his dark ingratitude toward them, his treacherous machinations warranted the worst forebodings.[5] The Romans breathed again on beholding him as well advised as his forebears. The reform of public morals, begun at their behest, was rigorously prosecuted by him: scandalous debauchery, flagrant misconduct of wanton women, the new fad of employing eunuchs, were repressed with a

[1] Dio Cassius, lxvi. 26. Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii*, vi. 32.
[2] Suetonius, *Titus*, 9; *Domit.*, 2. Dio Cassius, ibid.
[3] Suetonius, ibid.
[4] Plutarch, *De sanitate præcepta*, 3.
[5] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 2,

strong hand. His predecessors had never ventured to lay hands upon such of the priestesses of Vesta as had been forgetful of their vows; to three of them Domitian sent word that they must needs put an end to their sinful lives; according to the barbarous usage of that day, Cornelia, the High Vestal, was buried alive; her accomplices were flogged to death in the open Forum.[1]

He displayed no less zeal in the administration of justice, insisting on its being impartial; he himself revised the sentences of the courts, quashing them whenever they appeared to be tainted by favoritism, and, in such cases, branding the offending judges as criminals. "So masterfully did he manage the magistrates of Rome and the provincial governors, that they were never known to be so unbiased and so just."[2] This testimony, coming from Suetonius, who is generally so severe toward Domitian, goes to show that in the course of his reign public opinion was still favorable to him; and it explains how the grave Quintilian could style him as a "most holy censor."[3] Martial applauds him "for having brought back modesty into the family life."[4]

We hear the same chorus of praise from the majority of his contemporaries: Statius, Valerius Flaccus, Silius Italicus, all tender him like homage.[5] Tacitus and the younger Pliny were decorated with the prætorship by him;[6] for Domitian, true to the best traditions of his family, at that date affected a fine ardor in the cause of literature and art. We find him founding anew and at great expense the libraries destroyed in the late conflagrations;[7]

[1] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 7, 8. Dio Cassius, lxvii. 2, 3, 12. Martial, *Epigr.*, vi. 2; ix. 7, 8. Statius, *Silv.*, iii. iv. 73, 78; iv. iii. 14, 15. Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii*, vi. 17.

[2] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 8.

[3] "Sanctissimus censor." Quintilian, *Inst.*, iv. *præf.* Many inscriptions and coins of Domitian bear this title of "Censor," "Censor Perpetuus." See Willmanns, *Exempla inscriptionum latinarum*, No. 925. Orelli, Nos. 766, 768.

[4] Martial, *Epig.*, vi. 2–4, 7.

[5] Statius, *Silv.*, iii. iv. 74; iv. iii. 213. Valerius Flaccus, i. v. 12 *et seq.* Silius Italicus, iii. 618 *et seq.*

[6] Tacitus, *Annales*, xi. 11. The Younger Pliny, *Ep.*, iii. 11; vii. 16.

[7] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 20.

in magnificent style re-erecting the monuments which his father and brother had been unable to restore; surrounding the public sports with an atmosphere of splendor which recalled Nero's day.[1]

All this ruinous ostentation was intended to clear him of any suspicion of cupidity or miserliness. On the contrary, he seemed to be as unselfish as he was liberal, — by refusing to accept inheritances from heads of families, and by mercilessly proscribing the informers. "Who does not punish them," he said, "encourages them." Were all these really but show-virtues on parade? One is tempted to think so, seeing how the sovereign's execrable ending gave the lie to every one of them; and yet, though at bottom Domitian may always have been depraved, he had sufficient control of his base instincts to hold them in check until toward the last, when he gave them full rein. For fifteen years he reigned, and only during the last two did the monster unmask himself. But it is by the dark deeds of those two years, which overshadow all the good, that posterity has judged him.

"Need made him grasping," says Suetonius;[2] "terror, cruel." These two words explain the change which made the last of the Flavians rival Nero and Caligula in ferocity. The Imperial finances, rehabilitated by Vespasian, had not sufficed to meet the princely expenditures of his sons, especially of this last one;[3] the increase of pay granted the army by him simply spelled national bankruptcy. Everything must needs be turned into cash. The Treasury was again authorized to proceed to any extreme of overtaxation; the informers licensed to spy out any source of wealth.[4]

A revolt in Upper Germany furnished an excuse for rigorous reprisals. It had been fomented by a member of the Roman aristocracy, one Antonius Saturninus, who was commander in those parts. His two legions had joined

[1] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 4, 5.
[2] Id., 9.
[3] "Inopia rapax, metu sævus." Suetonius, *Domit.*, 3.
[4] Id., 5. Plutarch, *Public.*, 15. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, viii. 21.

in the uprising of the Germans, who were forming in readiness to cross the frozen Rhine to combine forces with them, when a sudden thaw halted their manœuvres and afforded Norbanus the opportunity of surrounding them and of repressing the rebellion. Antonius had had his accomplices at Rome; their names were found in his captured correspondence. Out of a feeling of humanity Norbanus hastened to destroy it;[1] but this precaution merely excited Domitian's suspicions, and brooding over them maddened him. Not knowing whom he had most to fear, he struck about him blindly, venting his rage chiefly on the noblest families, which he well knew were hostile to him, in their lofty disdain regarding the Flavians as interlopers in the ranks of the old patrician order. "Very many senators," Suetonius tells us, "and among them some who had been consuls, were put to death as instigators of novelties."[2]

Had Domitian merely cast aside the mask, or had he lost his mind? A prey to his suspicions, and his mad longing to baffle the conspirators, he showed himself unbelievably treacherous, jealous, cruel in cold blood, meanly malevolent. The terrors which had prompted his crimes became their own punishment: everything about him seemed to bode ill to him, a distant footstep made him shudder. Shutting himself up in his palace, he dwelt in direful distrust of every one. By his orders its halls had been covered with brilliantly polished marbles which reflected every object and thus enabled him to see whatever went on behind his back. Here he would walk up and down, hour after hour, his heart wrung with anguish, tortured by uneasy fancies, and baleful plans, his only distraction catching flies or reading the *Memoirs of Tiberius*, whence he learned new lessons in cruelty.[3]

In this the informers were always ready to assist him: now become his favorites they took good care to furnish

[1] Dio Cassius, lxvii. 11. Suetonius, *Domit.*, 6.

[2] "Complures senatores, in his aliquot consulares, interemit . . . quasi molitores novarum." Suetonius, *Domit.*, 10.

[3] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 14, 20.

him with victims, for, to him as to them, the slightest pretext sufficed. Salvius perished for having celebrated the birthday of his uncle, the Emperor Otho; Metius Pomposianus, because he was born under a constellation which promised him the throne; Lucullus, for having permitted his name to be given to a new style of lance he had just invented. That a woman had disrobed in presence of a statue of the Emperor was quite enough to sign her death-warrant. But, more than any others, the ruler's kinsfolk and members of the royal household were most exposed to his maniacal wrath. One of his cousins, Flavius Sabinus, received the death summons because a herald at one of the consular gatherings had styled him, by mistake, *Imperator*, instead of consul. For his secretary, Domitian had taken Epaphroditus, Nero's freedman, who, it will be remembered, out of pity had helped his master to kill himself; bethinking himself that such past services might prove a bad example for the future, his new master had him put to death.[1]

The amazement and horror manifested by the wretched creatures, condemned so unexpectedly and on such futile pretexts, had become the sole pastime of this barbarian. Nero, with all his refinement of cruelty, shrank from being a witness of their tortures. Domitian regarded it as the finest of sports; delighted especially in observing his victims, when, even while exulting in their secure and prosperous position, they were suddenly overwhelmed by hopeless fate. Whenever he was heard to speak of his fondness for any one or treated any one affectionately, that person might well tremble for his life: witness that Receiver whom he dismissed one day after lavishing honors and privileges upon him. On the morrow he ordered him to be crucified.[2]

Domitian had begun to slay in self-defence; he persisted in slaughtering from frenzy, urged on by his ferocious instincts and his hatred of everything great or good. All moral excellence was detestable in his eyes, upright-

[1] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 10–14. Dio Cassius, lxvii. 12.
[2] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 14.

ness most of all, so much so that he never suffered a word in eulogy of it to be uttered in his presence. Julius Rusticus was slain for having praised Thaseas and Helvidius Priscus, calling them "the most virtuous of mankind."[1] To mention moral rectitude, even to think of it, was become dangerous; to exterminate it more effectually, he caused the Senate to issue an edict banishing the philosophers from Rome; "he would have liked," says Tacitus, "to have left no vestige of honesty extant."[2] The attractions of a secure existence at the centre of the Empire under the Flavians had drawn thither a whole circle of noble minds; Domitian's decree speedily dispersed them. Artemidorus could not safely remain in the neighborhood of Rome, save by keeping in hiding; Epictetus made for the Epirus, Dio Chrysostom for the country of the Getes. All that was left to face the tyrant was the terror-stricken Senate which the Prætorian Guards held in a state of speechless servility to their lord. Domitian had made use of them to execute his proscriptions; he used them likewise to pillage right and left, for his lust for blood had not made him unmindful of his thin purse. On the contrary, inasmuch as every act of banishment or criminal conviction carried confiscation of property in its train, he was fain to multiply them. The pursuit of inheritances was likewise revived with keener avidity than ever: the testimony of a single witness, swearing that the deceased had intended to bequeath his fortune to the Emperor, sufficed to throw it into his clutches.[3] From this single fact, one can fancy what terrors must have dogged the Romans' steps. "The spy-system had completely broken up social life; men were afraid to speak, they feared to listen."[4]

One of the numerous taxes the Treasury had been ordered to extort, the two drachmas paid into the Temple

[1] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 10.

[2] "Expulsis insuper sapientiæ professoribus, atque omni bona arte in exilium acta, ne quid usquam honestum occurreret." Tacitus, *Agricola*, 2. Suetonius, *Domit.*, 10. Dio Cassius, lxvii. 13. Pliny, *Epistol.*, iii. 11; *Paneg.*, 47. Aulius Gellius, xv. 11. Philostratus, *Vita Apoll.*, viii. 1, 4.

[3] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 12.

[4] Tacitus, *Agricola*, 2.

by the Jews, gave rise to outrages of peculiar vindictiveness, and enlarged the circle of those caught in the meshes of the law.[1] This offering on the part of the Israelites to their national sanctuary had been originally a voluntary contribution, but after the destruction of Jerusalem it had come to be regarded differently. We have seen how their conqueror had treated it as a tribute to be levied on the whole race, and had consecrated it to the rebuilding of the Capitol.[2] Only those, however, who registered themselves as Jews, were subject to it; and many of the circumcised, in order to avoid payment, concealed their origin. The tax-gatherers were not slow in scenting these frauds, but their investigations, which were pushed forward most thoroughly and in defiance of all decency, resulted in a discovery which caused them as much surprise as embarrassment: there were any number of people in Rome who, though never circumcised, had adopted a Judaic mode of life. Ought they, too, be subjected to the tax laid upon Israel? A decree of Domitian settled the difficulty by ruling that it was not circumcision, but "the Jewish life" which rendered the tax obligatory.[3] Now all those were supposed to lead "the Jewish life" who had forsworn idolatry and avoided the temples, the profane festivals, and public ceremonies, and who distinguished themselves from the ordinary citizens by the austerity of their morals.

Among this number were the Christians: when summoned to pay the didrachma, most of them refused; they could not allow themselves to be confounded with Jews in this way, without being guilty of falsehood, — it was a sort of apostasy. But then what were they in the eyes of the Emperor? By what right did they absent themselves from the official worship, if they could not lawfully lay claim to the concessions granted to the Israelites? The

[1] Suetonius, ibid. *Domit.*, 12.

[2] See Chapter I. page 5.

[3] "Præter cæteros judaicus fiscus acerbissime actus est; ad quem deferebantur qui, vel improfessi judaicam viverent vitam, vel dissimulata origine, imposita genti tributa non pependissent." Suetonius, *Domit.*, 12.

Treasury agents were not alone in raising this question; lawmakers and statesmen were likewise bound to discuss it, for the religion of Rome constituted an integral part of every Roman citizen; to neglect its rites was to be false to one's duty, a betrayal of one's sovereign and country. The Christians could not, like the Jews, plead the excuse of a recognized religion as justifying their withdrawal; their meeting-places in no way resembled other temples; neither victims nor blood-offerings were ever beheld there. They must, therefore, be godless, faithless; this presumptive charge of atheism involved a crime against the State, high treason.

Thus, then, it was the collection of the didrachma which accidentally gave occasion to the movement against the Church, without any premeditated design on the part of the Emperor. A very large number of citizens, who refused either to pay the tax or to acknowledge any affiliation with Judaism, yet leading "the Jewish life,"[1] were charged with atheism, and by that very fact liable to judicial prosecution. There was no need of a new edict, that of 64 was still in force; they had only to apply it to reopen the era of persecution.

In Nero's time, the tempest had raged from every quarter, engulfing indiscriminately all such as public rumor saw fit to denounce. This time its fury seemed directed, by preference, against the upper classes, where, as was well known, the Gospel numbered many disciples. Money, which had been the prime motive of the prosecutions, now became their chief end as well. The spies, with an eye single for the wealth of their prisoners, took care to select only such as were worth plucking. One of Domitian's extravagant acts aided them in their manipulations. He had become tainted by the same mad ideas as Caligula, laying claim to divine honors, erecting his statue in the Capitol, and taking good heed that it should not lack sacrifices. The letters despatched in his name bore these words: "Our Lord and God wills it and com-

[1] Dio Cassius, lxvii. 14.

mands it."[1] For all such as held any position at court it was a duty of State to take part in these acts of adoration. There they awaited the Christians. Spied on by the informers, every one whose conscience forbade his participation in these sacrileges was forthwith denounced, accused of *lèse-majesté*, atheism, and "Jewish customs." Far less would have sufficed to seal their doom.

The most illustrious victim was a cousin of the Emperor, Flavius Clemens, whom Rome had beheld hitherto openly practising the new faith. Neither his birth nor the consular dignity with which he had been reinvested in 95, could save him from a criminal's death. His wife, Flavia Domitilla, shared his belief; she was transported to the island of Pandataria.[2] Their niece, also called Flavia Domitilla, was banished to the Isle of Pontia,[3] where her life became "a long martyrdom."[4] According to the testimony of Dio Cassius, these members of the Imperial family were punished for the crime of atheism. "On this charge," he adds, "many others who had adopted Jewish customs, underwent a like condemnation; some suffered the penalty of death, others the confiscation of their property."[5] This goodly number of believers martyred under Domitian is likewise witnessed to by another chronicler of the period, Brutius.[6] Thus, then, the persecution extended its ravages, as in the year 64, although not with the same ferocity; there is no mention made of the cruelties reserved for people of the lower ranks whereof Nero had been so prodigal: human torches, crosses, the wild beasts of the amphitheatre. Domitian and the informers would seem to have kept constantly in

[1] "Dominus et deus noster hoc fieri jubet." Suetonius, *Domitian*, 13. Dio Cassius, lx. vii. 13; *Paneg.*, 11. Aurelius Victor, *Cæsar*, xi. 2. Philostratus, *Vita Apoll.*, vii. 24, 32.

[2] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 15. Dio Cassius, lxvii. 13.

[3] Eusebius, *Histor. Eccl.*, iii. xviii. 4.

[4] S. Jerome, *Ep.* 108, *ad Eustochium.*

[5] Dio Cassius, lxvii. 14.

[6] "Scribit Brutius plurimos christianorum sub Domitiano fecisse martyrium, inter quos et Flaviam Domitillam Flavii Clementis ex sorore nepotem, quia se christianam esse testata sit." Eusebius, *Chron.* ii., ad Olympiad., 218.

view the size of their victims' purses. These features so distinctly mark this Second Persecution, that it has been concluded with every appearance of likelihood, that the Martyrs must have belonged, for the most part, to the higher classes of society.

Outside of those I have mentioned, their names have not been preserved by Christian tradition; one of them, notwithstanding, would seem to be referred to in a passage found in Dio Cassius. After having spoken of the persons condemned in 95, on the grounds set forth above, the historian adds: Domitian "likewise put to death Glabrio, who had been Trajan's fellow-consul; he charged him with the same crimes."[1] The vague terms employed by Suetonius in recording this condemnation, already referred to above,[2] convey a similar impression. "Domitian," he says, "put to death many senators, some of whom had been consuls, and among these, as being guilty of 'novelties,' Civius Cerealis, Pro-consul of Asia, Salvidianus Orfitus, and Acilius Glabrio, then in exile."[3] What were these "novelties," if not "the new superstition,"[4] which the same historian tells us was the capital crime of the Christians under Nero?

These inferences alone would not suffice to establish the fact that Glabrio believed in the Gospel; but recent discoveries go so far toward confirming them that there is little room left for doubt. A crypt containing the bodies of Christians named "Acilii" has been unearthed in the most ancient part of the Cemetery of Priscilla, which dates back to the time of the Flavians.[5] So, then, there were Christian members of the family at that epoch;

[1] Dio Cassius, lxvii. 13.

[2] See page 54, note 2.

[3] "Complures senatores, in his aliquot consulares, interemit: ex quibus Civicum Cerealem in ipso Asiæ proconsulatu, Salvidianum Orfitum, Acilium Glabrionem in exilio, quasi molitores novarum rerum." Suetonius, *Domit.*, 10.

[4] "Afflicti suppliciis christiani, genus hominum superstitionis novæ et maleficæ." Suetonius, *Nero*, 16.

[5] De Rossi, *Bullet. de Archeologia cristiana*, 1888–1889, pp. 15–66, 103–133 and *pl.* i.–ii. v. Cf. P. Allard, *Histoire des persécutions pendant les deux premiers siècles*, chap. ii. § 11, pp. 113–115.

consequently we are entirely justified in concluding from the testimony of Dio and Suetonius, that Acilius Glabrio shared their new faith.

Nevertheless it is hardly probable that the family burial-ground of the "Acilii" ever contained his remains, since he was an exile when Domitian's decree overtook him.[1] For many a long day that sovereign had nursed his hatred of Glabrio, and had evidenced it in the most brutal fashion, in the very year of his consulship (91), by forcing him to fight unarmed against wild beasts, at his villa in Albano.[2] In high dudgeon at Glabrio's victory, he banished him, but even exile could not shield him from the argus-eyed informers; he had been marked out as leading the same life as the Flavians under sentence for atheism; he was denounced and on this charge doubtless condemned to death. For this reason he may rightfully claim his place among the martyrs between Clemens and the Domitillas.

What became of the Jewish members of the Imperial household during the reign of persecution? Agrippa and Berenice, who died in good season to escape the horrors of this reign, probably knew only its opening years of happy memory.[3] As for Josephus, it would seem that he at first managed to adapt himself to the new conditions with the same flexibility he had evidenced in the stormy periods of his earlier career. He had been shrewd enough to win over the good-will of the Emperor and his spouse,

[1] "Complures senatores . . . interemit . . . Acilium Glabrionem in exilio." Suetonius, *Domit.*, 10.

[2] Dio Cassius, lxvii, 14. Juvenal, iv. 99–101.

[3] Josephus (*Vita*, 65) declares in so many words that, at the time he was writing his autobiography, Agrippa was dead. It is true that the last coins bearing the name of this prince must have been issued in 95, according to certain reckonings. (Madden, *Coins of the Jews*, 1881, pp. 148–159.) But the starting-points of the several eras marked on these coins give rise to so many contradictory results that it is difficult to conclude anything with certainty from them. See Eckhel, *Doctrina nummorum veterum*, iii. 493–496. Lenormant, *Trésor de Numismatique*, pp. 127–130. Cavedoni, *Biblische Numismatik*, i. 53 *et seq.*, 61–64; ii. 38 *et seq.* De Lévy, *Geschichte der jüdischen Münzen*, p. 82. De Saulcy, *Numismatique de la Terre Sainte*, p. 316; *Étude chronologique de la vie et des monnaies des rois juifs Agrippa I. et Agrippa II.*, in the *Mémoires de la Société française de Numismatique*, 1869.

Domitia, who protected him openly;[1] but it was especially Nero's freedman, Epaphroditus, then secretary to Domitian, who became his stanchest patron.[2] Changes of fortune had but fortified the fine character of this aforetime slave; he was particularly interested in Mosaism, its lofty teachings appealing to him greatly. At his request Josephus undertook a huge work which he entitled *Jewish Antiquities*, wherein, while giving a history of the Hebrew race, he endeavored to show that by its glorious deeds, the nobility of its beliefs, its laws, its institutions, this people, so unjustly despised, was really a worthy rival of Greece and Rome. The sacred books of Israel were naturally the principal source whence he drew his facts, but numerous documents, now lost, were at his disposal; of these he made good use in his efforts to explain and supplement the Bible-narrative in many points.

In this work the history of the Jews is carried only as far as the Judean War, where it naturally refers to the narrative he had already given of that campaign as its sequel.[3] Nevertheless, inasmuch as the part played therein by the author had been widely misrepresented by his fellow-countrymen, and as the facility with which he had passed over to the Flavians had been branded by them as treason, he felt obliged to justify himself, and wrote an apology in his own defence, wherein he shows that the fact that he had conducted himself with befitting prudence in the Roman camp and in the palace of the Flavians in no wise detracted from the lofty courage he had given proof of in his hours of critical danger. He appeals especially to the testimony in his favor tendered by Titus and Vespasian. That of his compatriots was not so friendly. Justus of Tiberias had even published, about that time, an account of the war in Judea, in which he charged him with having presented the events under a very false light.[4] The disappearance of this work makes

[1] Josephus, *Vita*, 76.
[2] Id., *Antiq. Jud.*, i. *Procem.*, 2; *Contr. Apion*, ii. 41; *Vita*, 76.
[3] Josephus, *Antiq. Jud.*, xx. xi. 1.
[4] Id., *Vita.*, 9, 17, 37, 65, 70, 74.

it impossible to judge how well grounded its criticisms may have been. Something has been said already [1] as to the caution as well as to the confidence merited by Josephus in all that concerns Israel.

Ought we to accord him the same confidence when he is speaking of the Pagan world, with which he became acquainted in later life? The treatise he published then against Apion proves that he had only a superficial knowledge of the profane writers. The Egyptian scholar he strove to refute had rummaged all the old writers and piled up text upon text to prove that the Jewish religion was not entitled to the prestige of antiquity claimed for it by its zealous adherents.[2] Josephus marshals against him a host of authorities, which are, however, as a rule, of quite as little weight. With a total lack of discernment, he borrows them from that Jewish School of Alexandria, which had never shown the least scruple about forging its quotations and freely attributed its ideas, and even the language of the Scriptures, to Orpheus, Linus, Homer, or to any of the poets and sages of Hellas. Josephus composed too much and too quickly to have thoroughly mastered his subject-matter.

Plagued by a perfect passion for literary production ever since he had become familiar with Greek, he never ceased planning new works: a revision of his *Jewish Antiquities*, which ended with the twelfth year of Nero, bringing it down to Domitian's day; the composition of a great work in four volumes on God and His Essence; another on the Mosaical laws.[3] Doubtless death balked these projects; at all events there remain no vestiges nor any mention of these huge labors. It was in the year

[1] See above, page 39.

[2] The grammarian Apion, native of an Egyptian oasis, in the first century gained great notoriety, not so much for his erudition which was of the shallowest description, as for his noisy self-conceit. Tiberius called him "the cymbal of the world": "he might more justly," Pliny adds, "have styled him 'the Tambourine of his own renown.'" (*Histor. Natur., præf.*, 25). His boast was that the dedication of one of his works to any one would suffice to immortalize that person's memory. His attacks on the Jews were collected in the five books of his Αἰγυπτιακά.

[3] Josephus, *Antiq. Jud. procem.*, l. xxxi. 2.

93 that he contemplated beginning them,[1] and already the informers were hotfooted on his track. Twice their reports had rendered his position at court desperately dangerous;[2] some remnant of the ruler's partiality for him had saved his head. But the day came when nothing could check the sovereign's murderous fury. After his kinsfolk, Flavius Clemens and his wife, after their mother Domitilla, after his secretary Epaphroditus, his rage was turned against the Jews at court, all the more perilously circumstanced from their conspicuous station. In all likelihood Josephus was carried off during one of these outbreaks of wild wrath.

Had he foreseen the catastrophe wherein he was doomed to perish? Some have thought they could discern traces of such inklings in a discourse attributed to him and known under the name of the Fourth (Apocryphal) Book of the Maccabees. Its author is a Jew imbued with the Stoics' ideas, who asks of profane Wisdom the courage needful to face tortures and death. The name he gives his work, *A Discourse on the Sovereignty of Reason*,[3] sufficiently indicates its spirit; nevertheless the soul and temper of Israel are strikingly in evidence throughout, and make it such a moving exhortation to martyrdom that the Church has treasured it, despite the fact that she possessed the authentic history of Eleazar and the seven brothers, whereof this Discourse is really but a philosophical amplification.

All absorbed as is the writer in making reason his main support, one can see that he has received and still retains the impress of a Pharisaic education. He holds to the very minutiæ of the Law, declaring that to transgress it in little things is as sinful as in greater; indeed in both cases the authority which reason attributes to the Law is equally opposed.[4] With the Pharisees he believes in the Resurrection, and a future life wherein the

[1] Josephus, *Antiq. Jud.*, xx. xi. 2.
[2] Id., *Vita.*, 96.
[3] Περὶ αὐτοκράτορος λογισμοῦ. See Grimm's commentary on it, in his *Exegetisches Handbuch zu dem Apokriphen*, vol. iv.
[4] 4 Macc., i. 5.

righteous who have died for God shall live in Him and for Him.[1] He sees in the sufferings of the martyrs a sacrifice which expiates the sins of the people and reconciles them with the Lord.[2] But ever and anon amid these Jewish doctrines there appears the author's ruling thought,— that Reason is the queen of all virtues, the subduer of the passions of men.[3] In obedience to her promptings, Israel abstains from food forbidden by the Law, and observes all the commandments of Mosaism; piety and reason are one and the same thing.[4] This, assuredly, is an interpretation which would be disavowed by the orthodox teachers of the Jewish nation; and yet not at all surprising, emanating from the Israelites of Rome, whom long intercourse with the philosophers had rendered far less rigorous.

It has already been stated that there is a tradition which ascribed this discourse to Josephus: both Eusebius and Saint Jerome have handed it down to us without any thought of questioning its truth.[5] The objections raised by modern critics are not damaging enough to weaken their testimony. Nothing could be more likely, indeed, than that Josephus, on beholding the fate of the tyrant's favorites all about him, and hopeless of any happier lot himself, should have searched the acts of his nation's martyrs for that fortitude which, not he alone, but his brethren also, needed to face the torturers.

The frenzy of the Emperor made no distinction between Jews and Christians. For more than a century the rumor had been current throughout the whole Orient that the empire of the world should fall to one of the seed of David. When it was reported to him, the tyrant gave orders that whosoever was connected, either closely or remotely, with the kingly house of Jerusalem should be

[1] 4 Mac., i. 20; cf. 13, 15, 17, 18.
[2] Id., 6, 17.
[3] Αὐτοδεσποτός ἐστι τῶν παθῶν ὁ εὐσεβὴς λογισμός. 4 Macc., 1.
[4] 4 Macc., 1, 16, 18, 20.
[5] Eusebius, *Histor. Eccles.*, iii. x. 6. S. Jerome, *De vir. illustr.*, 13; *Contra Pelagianos*, ii. 6. For other authors who ascribe this book to Josephus, see Grimm, *op. cit.* iv., p. 293 *et seq.*

put to death. Certain Christians were singled out as descendants of the olden Jewish dynasty: these were two grandsons of Jude, the Saviour's cousin, who were living in obscurity far away in Batanæa. An Imperial emissary[1] was sent in search of them over beyond Jordan, and brought them back with him to Rome. When asked by the Emperor whether they were descended from David, they promptly answered:

"Nothing could be truer."

"And what property do you own, what is your wealth?" continued Domitian.

"Our two shares taken together amount to about a thousand denarii, consisting not in money but of some thirty-nine acres of land which we till ourselves and from which we gain our livelihood and the wherewithal to pay our taxes." And they stretched forth their horny hands, calloused by toil.

Domitian questioned them as to the Christ and His reign, concerning the nature and time of His coming. They replied that the kingdom was not of earth, but of Heaven, and that it would be revealed only at the end of time, when the Christ would come in His glory to judge the living and the dead, and would render unto each man according to his works. The simplicity of these rustics completely disarmed the tyrant; he ordered their release, smiling contemptuously at their visionary fancies.[2]

This incident proved of profit to the Christians. Reassured by his cross-examination of Jesus' own kindred, Domitian considered it superfluous to prosecute such inoffensive creatures, who were far too taken up with heavenly visions to dream of conspiracy. Thereafter the spies that informed on them met with a cold reception. According to the accounts of Hegesippus and Tertullian, the sovereign even intervened actively in their favor,

[1] Ἰουδάκατος, *Evocatus*. The *Evocati* were generally veteran soldiers who, mustered at the call of some military commander, re-enlisted and formed a picked body about his person, which he kept in reserve for confidential missions and positions of trust. See Daremberg, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités*, EVOCATI.

[2] Hegesippus quoted by Eusebius (*Histor. Eccles.*, iii. xix. xx.).

giving orders to stop the persecution and to recall the exiles.[1] Tertullian ascribed this measure to a last remnant of humanity. Perhaps motives of an altogether political and personal nature would suffice to explain this last semblance of justice. It was terror that had made Domitian cruel; it was his fears which led him to attack the aristocracy knowing its hostility to him. "Nobility, wealth, honors, whether refused or accepted, became so many crimes in his eyes, and virtue the most unpardonable of all."[2] This frenzy of destruction had free sway so long as he chose his victims only from the higher classes; what mattered it to the plebeians, sated with festivals and banquetings, how many philosophers he expelled, or how many consular dignitaries and patrician lords he murdered or sent into exile? "With perfect impunity," says Juvenal, "he might despoil Rome of so great a number of noble and glorious lives, and none would rise up to avenge them; his doom was sealed the day he ventured to trouble the working-men.[3] Then, indeed, he was lost, he whose hands were dripping with the blood of the Lamia!"[4]

Who were these "working-men" who wrought the tyrant's downfall when he attempted to persecute them? It has been conjectured that, in all probability, the reference is to the Christians. Of their number Domitian had at first only singled out the believers of high rank, members of his own family and of the nobility. The number of these confessors of note during the first outbreak so far exceeded that of the lowlier martyrs, that Saint John, in speaking of their sufferings, mentions only "decollation," and beheading was a penalty reserved for persons of the

[1] Eusebius, *Histor. Eccles.*, iii. xx. Tertullian, *Apol.*, 5.

[2] Tacitus, *Histor.*, i. 2.

[3] "Periit postquam cerdonibus esse timendus cœperat. . . ." Juvenal, *Sat.*, iv. 154, 155. "Cerdo," derived perhaps from the Greek word Κέρδων (gain) occurs, in literature and in the inscriptions, sometimes as a proper name, sometimes as a common noun, its sense being completed by the addition of some particular trade. We find it applied only to slaves or humble wage-earners. See Daremberg, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités*, CERDO.

[4] An illustrious family eulogized by Horace, l. i. od. 21.

upper classes.[1] But once Nero's edict was revived in its full extent, it necessarily involved all recognized as Christians. Thus it speedily made itself felt among the common people, who had always constituted the majority in the Church of Rome. The intimate relations of these humble folk with their patrician brethren struck the tyrant as worse than suspicious. To his thinking it boded nothing short of plotting and conspiracy; another reason why he should shudder and rage. Thereupon the persecution descended to the very depths of the populace, and aroused that passionate hatred among the people which Juvenal denounces. The plebeian class, though indifferent to the sufferings of the great, was stirred when it beheld the sovereign attack its own; the same sentiments of horror aroused by Nero's atrocities were again excited in their souls. From the mutterings of the people, Domitian realized that the storm was gathering for an outbreak against him. Again he was terrified; and, all the more willingly since he had convinced himself of the harmlessness of the Christians' aims, he bade their persecutors cease.

Policy or pity, it was too late. Hatred had taken root in the hearts of all men. One last act of mad folly on Domitian's part was destined to recoil upon him fatally: among the names on his death-tablets he had even ventured to inscribe his wife's, Domitia, his chamberlain's, Parthenius, and that of Petrus Secundus, prefect of the Prætorium. Warned in time, they took counsel together and commissioned a freedman of Domitilla, a man of unusual strength named Stephanus, to anticipate the tyrant by giving him his death-blow. Parthenius introduced him to the prince under color of acquainting him with a fresh list of conspirators. While Domitian was reading it, the athlete sprang upon him and clumsily cut him in the groin. A furious struggle ensued, in which Stephanus was being worsted. The Emperor had already thrown him to the floor and was striving to wrench the blade

[1] Τῶν πεπελισμένων διὰ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ, "decollatorum propter testimonium Jesu." *Apoc.*, xx. 4.

from his bloody fingers, or gouge out his eyes, when Parthenius, on the lookout, gave entrance to a re-enforcement of gladiators, who stabbed him to death.[1]

The Flavian dynasty disappeared with him, for he had made wide inroads into the ranks of his own House. His cousin, Flavius Clemens, had perished by his orders, a witness to the Christ. The Emperor adopted the two sons of his victim, and had them educated by Quintilian,[2] designating them as heirs to the throne. What became of them in the tempest which swept away their father's assassin? No one knows. Their illustrious kinsfolk, the Domitillas, were still in exile. The sceptre fell from the hands of this family; but a purer aureole encircles their memory to-day: the glory of having been the first to confess the faith on the steps of the throne.

[1] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 17. Dio Cassius, lxvii. 15, etc. Philostratus, *Vita Apol.*, viii. 25. Orosius, vii. 10, 11. Aurelius Victor, *Epitome*, xi. 11, 12.

[2] Suetonius, *Domit.*, 15.

CHAPTER V.

THE LETTER TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES.

THE persecution had not been confined to Rome; little by little its ravages extended to the most distant provinces. The *Acts of Saint Ignatius* describes it as then raging like a whirlwind over Antioch in Syria; "with Ignatius like a trusty pilot steadfast at the wheel midmost the gale; by his fasts, his prayers, and the firmness of his teachings exorcising the dangers; shielding the simple-hearted and the weak in spirit from the wild surge of allurements which threatened to engulf them."[1] It is true, these Acts were not written till the fourth century; nevertheless, it is hardly likely that their author is merely romancing at pleasure; rather we may suppose that, in the case of a fact so notorious as the persecution instituted by Domitian at Antioch, he is founding his narrative on that of earlier writers.[2]

However this may be as regards the churches of Syria, there is no manner of doubt that elsewhere, especially along the coast of Asia Minor, the edict of proscription worked fearful havoc. A letter written by Pliny, Governor of Bithynia (about the year 112), speaks of certain Christians summoned before him, who declared that they had renounced their faith, "some, three years previously, others still less recently, some of them as long as twenty years back."[3] This last date would relegate the apostasy

[1] I take this testimony from the sole version of the *Acts of S. Ignatius* which is trustworthy, and the one which locates the scene of the Saint's trial, not in Rome, but in Antioch. See Lightfoot, *Apostolic Fathers*, Part II, vol. ii. pp. 363–495. Funk, *Opera patrum Apostolicorum*, vol. i. pp. lxxviii–lxxxiii and pp. 254 *et seq.*

[2] Lightfoot, *loc. cit.* p. 389.

[3] Pliny, *Epist.* x. 970.

of these unfortunates to Domitian's time. Thus, then, there must have been Christian congregations at that time in existence in Bithynia, which also suffered by the persecution.

Certain no less explicit passages in the Apocalypse allude to it as being equally active in Proconsular Asia: at Smyrna the Christians are thrown into prison;[1] at Pergamus, Antipas is put to death for having been a faithful witness unto Jesus.[2] Nor is he the sole martyr whose blood flows for the Saviour: "from beneath the mystical Altar whereon is throned the slaughtered Lamb," the Seer of Patmos hears a great cry ascending unto heaven.[3] These are the souls of those that have been slain for the word of God, and "the testimony which they have given" unto the Christ; generous believers "beheaded because of this their testimony."[4] Their blood cries out for vengeance unto the Lord, but He bids them bide their time as yet in their celestial resting-place, until the number of their brethren among the Lord's faithful followers, who like them were to be sacrificed, should be, at length, complete.[5] It was a mighty harvest, a harvest of bloodshed, which Saint John beheld.

He himself was overtaken by this persecution and became its most illustrious victim. As sole survivor of the Apostolic college, this "dearly beloved disciple of Jesus," was regarded by the entire Church with a special veneration. We have lost sight of him since the day when Saint Paul arrived in Jerusalem to explain his Gospel before the Apostles Peter, James, and John, whom he considered the pillars of Christianity.[6] What became of him in the days that followed? So long as Mary lived, it would appear that he dwelt in Jerusalem. The dying Jesus had bequeathed to him the care of His mother.[7] John accepted the heritage, and seems to have made it his principal care, since we nowhere encounter him as a

[1] Apoc. ii. 10.
[2] Id., ii. 13.
[3] Id., v. 6; vi. 9, 10.
[4] Id., xx. 4.
[5] Id., iv. 10, 11.
[6] Gal. ii. 1, 2, 9.
[7] John xix. 26, 27.

leader in the earliest efforts of the Apostles. Thereafter he only appears at Peter's side, and almost like his shadow, at the miracle of the Gate Beautiful; before the Sanhedrin; in Samaria; at the Assembly of Jerusalem.[1] So, near to Jesus' heart, and in the company of Mary, "the Son of the Thunderbolt"[2] had learned to temper that impetuosity which, more than once, the Saviour had been forced to chasten; his whole being was absorbed in love, in contemplation, and in study of that Divine Charity, whereof he was to be the evangelist in the evening of his days. In the lowly home which he offered as a refuge to the Mother of Jesus, John had become wonted to a life of retirement; and so, when Mary left him and fell asleep for the last time in his sight to awaken in the skies,[3] John's preaching did not take on that bold character presaged both by the zeal of his youth and by his ardent love for Jesus. Undoubtedly, like his brethren in the Apostleship, he preached the Gospel; like them, his life was devoted to making the Saviour better known and loved; but his ministry had none of the striking characteristics which distinguished that of Peter and James, and of Paul, especially. Scanty in matters of detail as is tradition concerning the other Apostles, it at least indicates in what parts of the world they labored. But as

[1] Acts iii. 1–11; iv. 1–22; viii. 14–25; xv. 1–31 and Gal. ii. 1, 2, 9.

[2] Mark iii. 17.

[3] An arbitrary interpretation of an obscure text is the sole foundation on which is based the opinion which locates the last residence and the tomb of the Blessed Virgin at Ephesus. *Ἔνθα ὁ θεολόγος Ἰωάννης καὶ ἡ θεοτόκος παρθένος ἡ ἁγία Μαρία* (Conc. Ephes. Mansi). This text of the council of Ephesus entirely lacks a verb; it does not state, therefore, that Mary and John were entombed in the place where the Fathers were writing, but may just as well signify that both were there venerated in one and the same sanctuary: perhaps that double church the ruins of which are still standing to the north of the Forum of Ephesus (Weber, *Guide du voyageur à Ephèse*, pp. 24, 25). The tradition which records that Jerusalem was the last home of the Holy Virgin rests, on the contrary, upon explicit testimony, which, it is true, only dates back to the fifth century, but comes nevertheless from witnesses of great weight, owing to the preciseness and continuity of their evidence. It was not, indeed, until the first half of that century, under the episcopate of Juvenal (429–458), that Mary's tomb was discovered at Gethsemane; thereafter, all down the centuries, the pilgrims' narratives mention this venerable sepulchre on this same spot, as well as the church which speedily enclosed it.

for Saint John, during the lives of Peter and Paul, it leaves him in complete oblivion and makes no mention of him until the closing years of the first Christian century; but, as if to make up for this neglect, it displays him then in a rôle of incomparable majesty, dominating the end of the Apostolic age by his writings and by the unanimous respect he is invested withal.

Proconsular Asia, now become his residence, was the seat whence John exercised this empire. Thither he had sought refuge after the fall of Jerusalem. Nor was he alone: those leading men of the Mother Church that had not fled over beyond Jordan accompanied him. Papias of Hierapolis speaks of a large company of Elders gathered about John; as intimates of the Apostles, having seen and heard them, they could repeat at first hand their reminiscences "of what they had heard said by Andrew, Peter, Philip, Thomas, James, Matthew, and the other disciples of the Lord."[1]

Outside of Saint John, Saint Philip is the only one of these Apostolic men whose ministry has left any lasting traces. From a union contracted before he was called by the Saviour, he had three daughters, who followed him to Asia and there were employed in what was then called the "gift of prophecy," with duties similar to those of the deaconesses. Two of them were virgins, the third married and led, like her sisters, a holy life, absorbed in spiritual things; she died at Ephesus.[2] Philip and his two other daughters resided in Hierapolis, where, in the third century, the Montanist Proclus mentions having seen their tombs.[3] Papias, Bishop of that city about 130, had known these virgins and from them gathered some

[1] Papias, quoted by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccles.*, iii. xxxix).

[2] The fact that the Deacon Philip the Evangelist had also virgin daughters who prophesied (Acts xxi. 8, 9) led to some confusion among ancient writers who identified him with the apostle Philip. Eusebius (H. E. iii. xxxi.) misunderstands and confuses the testimonies of Polycrates, the Montanist Proclus, and the Acts of the Apostles. The most reliable of those statements seems to be that of Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, in the latter part of the second century, who writes to Pope Victor that "Philip was one of the Twelve Apostles."

[3] Polycrates of Ephesus, quoted by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccles.*, iii. xxxi.).

marvellous tales, notably of a resurrection from the dead, happening in their day, probably at the prayer of the Apostle. They related how Joseph Barsabas drank a deadly poison, but was spared any ill effect. "John, Philip, and his pious daughters," adds Polycrates of Ephesus, "were the great lights of the Asia of that day. They are extinguished, but only to reappear at the last day at the Lord's advent, when He shall come from heaven in His glory, to gather His chosen ones." [1]

Having thus inherited all that was most venerable in Christian Jerusalem, Asia Minor became the centre whence the Glad Tidings emanated most effectively. Antioch had never been so famous or so fruitful. Rome, unquestionably, by virtue of its position as the See of Peter, was considered the head of the pastoral hierarchy and supreme seat of truth, but Rome no longer had its great Apostles. More fortunate at this period, Asia possessed John, the well-beloved of Jesus, His companion from the very first, His trustworthy and unanswerable witness. Paul's glory among these churches which he had begotten unto the Christ was thereby dimmed, since, striking as were his words, it was well known that he had been converted much later, and that he had never known the Divine Master personally. John, on the contrary, had beheld him with his own eyes, heard Him with his ears, touched Him with his hands; he had rested on His breast,[2] and from that source divine had drawn such visions of light, and a love so fervid, that none like him could speak of God; he was known, above all others, as the Theologian.[3] All Asia, with one voice, had accorded him this title, but, even more than for light, they went to him to find new Christian life. In the thirty years that had elapsed since Paul's last visit to this region, the gospel had never ceased spreading. Almost all the towns had churches of their own, and at the head of these com-

[1] Papias, *loc. cit.*
[2] John xxi. 20.
[3] Many of the ancient Fathers so entitle him: S. Athanasius, *Synopsis Scripturæ Sacræ*, 73. S. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.*, xii. 1, etc.

munities there was no longer a college of Elders, as in the primitive times, but a Bishop. There, as everywhere else, the hierarchy took on, little by little, its definitive form. Without confining himself to any one of these sees, John treated them all with a lofty fatherliness, as being under that universal jurisdiction bestowed by the Saviour on His Apostles, which should only disappear with the last of their number.

Tradition points to Ephesus as the usual residence of the Apostle during his stay in Asia.[1] The Master had foretold for him a baptism of blood, but without declaring to him either its manner or date.[2] He may well have believed that that hour had struck during these days of Domitian's persecution. The tyrant, as we have seen,[3] disquieted by the rumors which promised the Empire to descendants of the Kings of Juda, had given orders to seek out all the members of that noble stock. After the grandsons of Jude were brought to Rome from far away Batanæa and had been forced to defend themselves on this sole charge, what was more natural than that John, renowned as he was as having lived in intimate relations with the Christ, should have fallen under the same ban? He also was haled to Rome. Very ancient traditions establish the fact beyond a doubt that it was in that city he received the sentence of death. Peter and Paul, by watering Christian Rome with their blood, had already assured it an inexhaustible fertility, but Jesus desired that His dearly beloved disciple, by shedding his, should still further increase the faith and love of the supreme Church.

The traditional scene appointed for his execution is the Latin Gate,[4] or, more exactly, the open space which was later occupied by this entrance to Rome.[5] The torture

[1] *Acta Sanctorum*, 24 JOHN.
[2] Mark x. 39.
[3] See above, Chapter VI. page 66.
[4] Baronius, 92, 553. Tillemont, *Mémoires*, S. JEAN l'ÉVANGÉLISTE, Art. v.
[5] This gate, giving access to the Appian Way, was not opened until the days when Aurelian narrowed the city's boundaries. In the outer

began with the flogging which was always its precursor. Thus it was that under the knout John's blood in turn fructified the Roman soil. After this mournful prelude,[1] came the real torment, whereof the Acts of the Apostles cites other examples: the victim was plunged into boiling oil.[2] But still the hour foretold by the Christ had not arrived, the hour when He Himself would come for His disciple and take him to Himself for evermore.[3] To the amazement of the onlookers, John came forth from the fiery bath safe and sound.

Was it due to their emotion, or to pity, or mere prudence on the judges' part? At all events he was spared. Some little time must have elapsed between his arrest at Ephesus and his condemnation at Rome. In that interval Domitian had become reassured as to the Christians' aims and had begun to relax his proceedings against them. Inspired from on high, this movement of clemency led the magistrates to desist from further cruelties toward an aged man whom they had beheld snatched from death by a miracle; they were content with ordering his transportation to the Isle of Patmos, there to labor in the mines.[4]

walls of Servius, the Porta Capena served as entrance to two highways, the Latin and the Appian. Jordan, *Topographie der Stadt Rom.*, vol. ii. pp. 155, 163–166, 335.

[1] A mosaic in the Lateran represents the whipping of the Apostle: one noteworthy detail in this is that John's hair has been cut short, and many hold that this was done by order of the Emperor who was bald. Ciampini, *De sacris Ædif.*, ii. 8.

[2] Kraus, *Real Encyklopædie der Christlichen Alterthümer*, MARTYRIUM, i. ii.

[3] John xxi. 22.

[4] Tertullian is the first witness of tradition who makes known just what trials S. John had to endure: when felicitating the Roman church on having been enriched by the teaching and the blood of the great Apostles. "Peter," he says, "suffered the same torture as the Master; Paul was crowned, by dying like John the Baptist; the Apostle John, after having been immersed in boiling oil, was banished to an island" (*De Præscript.*, 36). Very many of the Fathers have preserved and lent their authority to this tradition and a large number of them name the place whither John was exiled the Isle of Patmos. S. Irenæus, *Hær.*, v. 30. Clement of Alexandria, *Quis dives salv.*, 42. Origen, *In Matth.*, xvi. 6. S. Victorinus of Pettau, *In Apocalyp.*, Ex Cap. x. 11; Ex Cap. xvii. 10. Migne, *Patrol. lat.*, v. 333. 338. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, iii. xvii. S. Jerome, *Contr. Jovin.*, i. 26. Though unanimous in attesting to the

Rome's penal colonies were always located in the wildest districts or on desolate islands. Patmos was no exception to this rigorous rule, displaying to the eyes of the traveller naught save a long chain of volcanic rocks, broken in two and connected by a narrow isthmus. To the east, its shores enclose a goodly harbor much frequented by navigators between Rome and Ephesus. Thereabouts was concentrated all the life and wealth of the island, for almost everywhere its soil is barren. The name *Palmosa* which it bore in the Middle Age, would indicate that it was once shaded by palm-trees. Of these there remains but a clump, in the valley called "The Saint's Garden;" elsewhere, we see nothing but scanty fields and vineyards.[1]

Jesus could not have provided for his Apostle a solitude where he would be more wholly absorbed in Him. John abode alone amid Greeks, solely occupied in their humble business. Had they been even more distinguished in intellect and feeling, what had they to offer which he did not possess in over-abundance in his union with the Christ? Ephesus and Ionia had displayed before his eyes the marvels of Greek Art; no memory, nor any image drawn from them is to be noted in his writings; not one single allusion to that poetry which is the glory of Hellas. The lovely isles round about Patmos have been celebrated by the bards of old. In their songs John hears only the discordant note, that mad worship of the sensible world, a deification of Nature's charms; from such fables he turned in disgust.

His gaze, all his thoughts, were rapt on matters of far deeper import, on the churches of Asia now in the midst of the persecution's worst horrors. He could easily com-

fact of the Martyrdom, three Fathers do not agree as to the period when it took place. Clement of Alexandria and Origen do not give the name of the persecuting ruler. S. Epiphanius (*Hæres.* li. 2) speaks of Claudius. Tertullian would seem to imply that all three Apostles suffered together under Nero; but, with much more reason, Eusebius and S. Jerome designate Domitian, and their opinion has generally prevailed.

[1] Ross, *Reisen auf den griechischen Inseln*, ii. 123–139. Tischendorf, *Reise in's Morgenland*, ii. 258–265. Victor Guérin, *Description de l'île de Patmos.*

municate with them, for Miletus, Ephesus itself, were but a few hours' sea-journey distant. He learned that there, as at Rome, the believers were being despoiled, imprisoned, put to death; but these were but outward sufferings, glorious struggles, which would but bring about a closer union of the martyrs with the Christ; a much more fearsome trial threatened their faith, which he considered more imperilled than their lives. That heresy which had so disturbed Saint Paul, continued to undermine these churches, under a form at once more hateful and more seductive. The germs of impurity it fostered had blossomed out in broad day. Now become a methodical system of teachings, known as "The Doctrine of the Nicolaïtes," [1] it threatened to corrupt the whole body.

The real origin of the Nicolaïtes is still uncertain; it would seem that they were Israelites and that their main efforts had in view the Christians of their own race, for in branding their infamy, the Apostle makes use of references and terms familiar only to Jews. "'T is a Synagogue of Satan," he says; "they say they are Jews and they are not.[2] Their doctrine is that of Balaam who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat meats sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication." [3]

Always this twofold temptation had proven a pitfall for that carnal people. They were only arrived at the threshold of the Promised Land when Balac bade the daughters of Moab spread their foul nets, wherein the Israelites forthwith fell.[4] Like dangers awaited them in Judea, the country of religious voluptuaries. In Phœnicia, as in the land of Canaan, license pushed to the point of madness was regarded as an act of religion. It took the Prophets centuries of strife to repress these unholy rites. This leaning towards the most shameless forms of idolatry became even more noticeable after the return from Baby-

[1] Apoc., ii. 15. [2] Id., iii. 9. [3] Id., ii. 14.

[4] "And the people began to commit fornication with the daughters of Moab and they called them to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people did eat and bowed down before their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baal-Peor and the wrath of the Eternal was kindled against Israel." Num. xxv. 1–3.

lon. The sufferings of their protracted exile, the Schools established in every part of Palestine, had purified their morals and elevated their minds, but none the less there remained, deep down in the nature of every Jew, that seed of sensuality. "You are still like your fathers before you," Saint Stephen tells them, "uncircumcised of heart." [1] And of this they gave proof in the churches of Asia, when, hardly as yet won over to the Gospel, their worst instincts reappeared. Once enfranchised from the bondage of the Law in the Christ, they held that they were freed of all restraints; we find them taking part in pagan festivals and sacred orgies, reproducing them in their own religious gatherings and transforming the pure mysteries of our faith into Bacchanalian revels. There is naught to indicate that they had then proceeded to that pitch of infamy unveiled by Saint Epiphanius; [2] but the tremendous scorn wherewith the Apostle scourges the Nicolaïtes leaves no doubt that their excesses had already grown intolerable.

How did the name of one of the seven Deacons [3] come to be associated with this sect? Tradition explains it in various ways. Nicholas of Antioch had a wife of unusual beauty, and had separated from her, in order to devote himself entirely to the Church. According to certain accounts, he lacked the greatness of soul to break beyond recall those bonds which had united them; he returned to her, lost little by little all fervor for the faith, and fell finally so low as to become the head and promoter of an unclean heresy.[4] Others recount, with more apparent likelihood, that when the woman's beauty caused men to accuse him of jealousy he offered to let any one who would take her from him. Thereby he merely meant to testify to his complete renunciation of all he had held dearest; the sectaries, seizing upon this unconsidered remark, held

[1] Acts vii. 51.

[2] S. Epiphanius, *Hæres.*, xxv. xxvi. In the opinion of the first witnesses of tradition, the Nicolaïtes were but one of the numerous and unclean sects of Gnosticism. S. Irenæus, *Hæres.*, iii. 11.

[3] Acts vi. 3.

[4] S. Irenæus, *Hæres.*, i. xxvi. 3. Hippolytus, *Philosophoumena*, i. vii. 36. S. Epiphanius, i. ii. *Hæres.*, 25.

that Nicholas had authorized the holding of women in common. Just as unfairly, they took advantage of this other saying of the holy Deacon: "One must needs abuse his flesh." By this Nicholas meant that men must repress their instincts, crucifying them with Jesus and for Jesus.[1] Changing a counsel of penance into a licentious maxim, they urged it as being a full permission to yield to temptations. Nor were they content with merely travestying the teachings of Nicholas after this fashion; they went so far in their impudence as to hold him up as their founder and use his name as their mask. The fact that these fables gained currency in Asia would prove, either that the Deacon was dead, or that he lived far away and in ignorance of them; for we find no evidence that he protested against this misuse of his name, as he assuredly would have done had he known of it; the most trustworthy witness in all that concerns him, Clement of Alexandria, tells us that he remained to his last day the self-same man he was when the Apostles chose him to be one of the Deacons, "full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom." [2] He expressly asserts that Nicholas never had to do with any woman, after he had generously separated from his wife; and that he and his whole family lived and died in the odor of sanctity.[3]

Apparently it was during the troublous days of the persecution that the Nicolaïtes unmasked their true character as it is depicted in the Apocalypse. John's presence at Ephesus had held them in restraint; they deemed it possible to venture anything once he had been removed to Rome and thereafter banished for life to Patmos; but from this final abode the Apostle kept his watchful eyes on the Christian congregations of Asia. Trembling for their faith, he resolved to address to them a sort of Encyclical, which, by being passed from church to church, might sustain their drooping courage and overawe the heretics.

[1] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromat.*, iii. iv. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, iii. xxix. Theodoret, *Hæret. Fab.*, iii. 1.

[2] Acts vi. 3.

[3] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromat.*, iii. iv.

This Epistle, which nowadays has become incorporated with the Apocalypse, forms its three opening chapters. In many ways it differs from the other Apostolic letters. Therein Saint John assumes the manner and tone of the Prophets of Israel, or, to be more precise, he allows the *objects* to reflect themselves therein which had altogether occupied his mind on the rock of Patmos. Doubtless since his first coming to Asia the turn of his thoughts, and of his language especially, had become conformed by degrees to that of the Alexandrian believers with whom he had associated daily; but, nevertheless, he had lived the Jewish life too long not to revert instinctively to its modes of thinking, when he found himself in this place, abandoned to himself. The bloody tragedies of Rome, whence he had just escaped by a miracle, reminded him of that sudden catastrophe wherein banished Israel had beheld Babylon overwhelmed: accordingly, the Prophets of that Captivity became the nourishment and stay of his soul, when the rough work in the mines left him a moment's leisure.

Hence comes, doubtless, the Biblical coloring, the strange forms his words are clothed in, an imagery formerly borrowed by Ezechiel and Daniel from the Assyrian world, and which we encounter again in the Visions of Patmos. Hence, too, the very notable part played therein by mystical numbers.[1] We know what importance was attached to them in the eyes of antiquity, as much among pagans as by the Jews, and what mysterious properties were attributed to them.[2] Pythagoras looks upon them as "the first principles of things." Divested of the more or less exaggerated commentaries of his disciples, the formula of the Greek sage may be reduced to this very acceptable

[1] "In the numbers of the Apocalypse, we must learn to grasp a certain mystic reason, whereby the Holy Ghost desires to make us more keenly attentive." Bossuet, *l'Apocalypse*, chap. vii. 4. ". . . Numeris quos in Scripturis esse sacratissimos et mysteriorum plenissimos . . . dignissime credimus." S. Augustine, *Quæstiones in Genesim*, i. clii.

[2] Aristotle, *Metaphys.*, i. v. and vi.; xii. vi. and viii. Ælian, *Variæ Historiæ*, iv. xvii. Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, vii. v. 5. Philo., *passim*. Mischna, *Pirke Aboth*, v. 7, 8.

interpretation, namely, that the primitive elements whereof the world is composed, being perfectly ordered, make the universe one immense harmony. And though number, indeed, is neither the source of life, nor even the type of being, it is to this concept what color is to the drawing, what melody is to the song; without adding anything which is essential to the thought, it gives it its strength and brilliancy, makes it more striking, expresses the most delicate turns of thinking, succeeds in depicting to our eyes and rendering audible to our ears that which words are powerless to utter.

Among the numbers held in special honor among the ancients, Seven holds incontestably the highest place: it is the mystical number deemed sacred beyond all others. Throughout the Orient, Persians, Assyrians, as well as Jews, ascribe to it this primacy.[1] Principally, it is when God enters into relations with His creatures that we find the Holy Books of Israel making use of it; it denotes, not simply the supernatural character of the divine action, but the fulness, the universality, the perfection wherewith God operates. In sign that God's seal was set upon his letter, John takes good care that this mystical number should everywhere be in evidence therein. He speaks in the name of the Seven Spirits who stand before the Eternal; the Son of Man appears to him having Seven Stars in His hand, amid the Seven Golden Candlesticks.

[1] The hallowed character of the number Seven seems to arise from the six days of creation and the Seventh whereon He rested, for we find it honored especially wherever the pure traditions concerning the origin of the world have been preserved, as among the Assyrians and Hebrews (Vigouroux, *la Bible et les découvertes modernes*, Part I. Book 1. Chap. 1. S. Jerome, *in Amos*, v.). In the Mosaic worship this number is like the divine seal set on everything which concerns the Eternal. We know with what rigor the Seventh Day of the week, the Sabbath, is consecrated to Him (Exod. xxxi. 15). The Paschaltide lasts seven days (ibid., xii. 16); seven weeks elapse between this Feast and Pentecost (Lev. xxiii. 15); the Golden Candlestick in the Holy Place has seven branches (Exod. xxv. 31–40; xxxvii. 17–24); seven unblemished lambs are offered as a holocaust at Pentecost (Lev. xxiii. 18); in the sacrifices for sin, seven sprinklings of blood are prescribed (ibid., xvi. 14), etc. From the East, the idea of perfection attached to the number Seven had passed over to the Greek and Roman world. Among many other witnesses to the fact, see Macrobius, *Somnium Scipionis*, i. 6. Aulius Gellius, iii. 10.

And when among the numerous Churches of Asia we find him addressing his words to Seven only, may we not rightfully suppose that it is for the same mystical reasons that he limits them to this number? Indeed, it behooves us ever to bear in mind that the Seer of Patmos is not, like Saint Paul, an athlete, a soldier of the Christ, contesting here on earth step by step with the foeman he would overcome; he is writing in a supernatural world, in a holy ecstasy.[1]

John unto the Seven Churches which are in Asia:

"Grace and peace from Him that is, that was, that is to come,[2] and from the Seven Spirits which stand before His Throne,[3] and from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the first begotten of the dead,[4] Prince of the kings of the world, Who hath loved us, Who hath washed us from our sins in His own Blood, Who hath made us the Kingdom and Priests of God His Father:[5] to Him be glory and power forever and ever. Amen!

"Behold He cometh on the clouds, and every eye shall see Him, even they which pierced Him;[6] and at sight of Him all the tribes of the earth shall bewail themselves.[7] Amen!

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, that is, that was, that is to come, the Almighty.

"I John, your brother, and your partner in tribulation and in the kingdom and the patience in Jesus Christ, was in the Isle which is called Patmos, because of the Word of God, and the testimony which I had given unto Jesus. On the Lord's day I was taken up in the spirit and I heard

[1] Ephes. vi. 11–17; 2 Tim. iv. 7–8.

[2] Ἐγονόμην ἐν πνεύματι. Apoc. i. 10.

[3] This is only a more explicit form of the saying in Exodus (iii. 14): "And God said unto Moses: I am that I am."

[4] Israel had known and revered long since these Seven Spirits who, the Apostle tells us, stand before God's throne, ready to carry His orders over the world and see that they are fulfilled, for mention is made of them in the Book of Tobias (xii. 15), which, as even most of the Rationalists agree, antedates the Christian Era.

[5] S. Paul (Coloss. i. 18), in like manner, calls Jesus "the first born from among the dead," that is the first, Who, by rising from the womb of Death, has taken on life anew, the Life Eternal.

[6] 1 Peter ii. 9.

[7] Zachar. xii. 10.

behind me a great Voice, like the peal of a trumpet, which said:

"'What thou seest, write in a book and send it to the Seven Churches which are in Asia, to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamus, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, to Laodicea.'

"And I turned to see the Voice that spake to me, and being turned, I saw Seven Golden Candlesticks, and in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a long garment and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and His hair seemed white as pure wool, like snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire. His feet were like unto fine brass glowing in a fiery furnace; and His voice as the voice of great waters. He had in His right hand Seven Stars, and out of His mouth went forth a sharp two-edged Sword. His countenance was as the sun when it shineth in its strength.[1]

"And when I saw Him I fell at His feet as dead; but He laid His right hand upon me and said to me:

"'Fear not! I am the First, and the Last, the Living One. I was dead, and behold, I am living for ever and ever, and I hold the keys of Death and Hell.'"

Of a truth, a strange picture this! So incongruous are its features that it scarcely appeals to the imagination, and we look in vain for the elements of beauty, even in a superhuman sense: there is neither any order, nor harmonious proportions, nor a just conformity of the whole. The Greeks, accustomed to their perfect productions in Art, were even less likely than we are to appreciate it. Consequently it seems most likely that John, though not neglecting or forgetting the interests of the Hellenic part of the Asiatic churches, destined his work, first and foremost, for the benefit of the believers in those communities who belonged by extraction to the Synagogue.

[1] This portrait of the Son of Man recalls a very similar appearance He made before the gaze of Daniel on the banks of the Tigris: "Then I lifted my eyes and I beheld a Man clothed in linen; His loins were girded with very fine gold; His body was like a chrysolite; His face gleamed like the lightning and His eyes like flames of fire; His arms and His feet had the appearance of sparkling brass and the sound of His voice was like the noise of a multitude." Daniel x. 5, 6.

Naturally as he had lived with them hitherto in the intimacy of the Jewish life, he would be most attached to them, and consequently to them he would speak most particularly in his letter. He knew that they cared far less for the plastic elements, by aid of which an idea assumes its form, than for the brilliancy and power wherewith it is clothed. God inspired him with the idea of setting his Vision in more striking relief, by using the same grandiose images which Ezechiel and Daniel had borrowed from Babylonian Art, and which thereafter had been familiar figures to the Israelitish mind. What it most behooves us, therefore, to recognize in all the symbolical features figuring forth the Saviour, is just what was intended by Ezechiel in his "Cherubim," and his life-endowed "Chariot," by Daniel with his fantastic animals, to wit, some idea or fact which is merely presented to us in this guise to increase our desire to grasp it more fully.

Interpreters have but too well understood this duty of casting aside the husk of the letter, for, in their eagerness to comprehend the hidden sense of the Sacred Word, they have frabricated many a meaning which has been far more ingenious than probable. The surest means of arriving at the real signification attached to each by the Seer, is to discover in what sense the same expression is used in the Prophets and in Jewish traditions. There are very few of the symbolical terms which do not admit of being explained thus after the most likely fashion.

The long robe in which the Son of Man is attired, is that of the Priests of Israel, and indicates the eternal Priesthood of the Christ. The cincture, as well, was part of the sacerdotal vestments,[1] but in token of Jesus' Kingship it is of gold. The locks and the head are of a dazzling white, like driven snow and the purest wool. This is reminiscent of Daniel, who speaks of his "Ancient of Days" as having white hair, an emblem of His Eternity.[2] Another of the Prophet's visions suggests the idea

[1] Exod. xxviii. 31–41. [2] Daniel vii. 9.

of making the gaze of the Christ like a flame which illumines the righteous and devours the wicked; of giving His footsteps in the supernatural world the blinding glow and the invincible heat of molten brass;[1] to His voice the majestic eloquence of great waters.[2] As for the two-edged sword that comes forth from the mouth of the Son of Man, it was a common figure of speech among the Jews: it images "the Word of God, living and effectual, more piercing than a sword sharpened on both edges, penetrating into the recesses of the soul and of the spirit, unto the joints and the marrow, discerning the thoughts and the intents of the heart."[3]

These symbols only depict the divine attributes of the Christ. Now John's gaze had not been absorbed by this glorious nimbus of his Vision: what he had ever first in mind, what he recalls over and over again in moving accents, is the Heart of Jesus, Saviour and Redeemer of our souls: "He hath loved us," he says, "and hath washed away our sins in His Blood; He hath made us Kings and Priests of God His Father."[4] Another detail about the Son of Man denotes a fruit of His coming no less precious than our Royal Priesthood. Jesus holds in His right hand Seven Stars, and Himself explains their meaning to the Apostle: "The Seven Stars are the Angels of the Seven Churches:"[5] whereby he would have us understand the Bishops of those religious communities. Thus the Divine Pastor portrays to us the ecclesiastical Hierarchy modelled after the image of the Heavenly Hierarchy. The Bishop, in whom Jesus lives anew in the fulness of the priesthood, has the same mission as the Angels, as regards the faithful committed to their care; he must needs maintain in them the unity of faith and love, purifying and enlightening them, perfecting in them the supernatural life, which from him should circulate throughout the mystical body whereof he is the head. In the divine economy and in the Saviour's eyes, the Bishop is in a manner

[1] Daniel x. 6.
[2] Ezechiel xliii. 2.
[3] Hebr. iv. 12.
[4] Apoc. i. 5, 6.
[5] Apoc. i. 20.

an incarnation of his Church: consequently it is in his person that John is bade to address each of the Churches of Asia figured under the form of the seven golden candlesticks.

"Write, therefore, that which thou hast seen, that which is, and that which shall be.

"Unto the Angel of the Church of Ephesus,

"Lo, thus saith He that holdeth the Seven Stars in His right hand, Who walketh in the midst of the Seven Golden Candlesticks: —

"I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and that thou canst not bear them that are evil. Thou hast tried them that say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars; thou art patient, thou hast suffered for My Name and thou hast not fainted. But somewhat I have against thee, because thou hast cooled in thy first love. Be mindful therefore from whence thou hast fallen, repent and return to thy first works: else will I come unto thee, and except thou dost penance, I will remove thy Candlestick out of its place.[1] Nevertheless this hast thou done well that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaïtes, which I hate also.

"Let him that hath ears, hearken to what the Spirit saith unto the Churches. To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life which is in the Paradise of God.[2]

"To the Angel of the Church of Smyrna,

"These things saith the First and the Last, which was dead and is alive: —

"I know thy sufferings and thy poverty (in reality thou art rich); [3] I know that thou art calumniated by them that say they are Jews and are not, but are the Synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. Behold the Devil will cast some of you into prison that you

[1] I will remove thee from the Church which is entrusted to thee and I will give it unto another Pastor.

[2] Reminiscent of Eden, in which was the Tree of Life, the fruits whereof, had our first parents remained faithful to the Lord, would have assured them the beatific vision and immortal life. Gen. iii. 22.

[3] Rich, that is, in real wealth, the possession of the virtues and supernatural life.

may be tried: you shall have ten days of tribulation.[1] Be faithful unto death and I will give you the Crown of Life.

"He that hath ears to hear let him hearken to what the Spirit saith unto the Churches. He that overcometh shall not suffer the Second Death.[2]

"Unto the Angel of the Church of Pergamus,

"Lo thus saith He that hath the Two-edged Sword: —

"I know where thou dwellest, there where the Seat of Satan is;[3] and thou holdest fast My Name, and hast not denied My Faith, even in the days when Antipas,[4] My faithful witness, suffered death among you, in the place where Satan dwelleth. But I have somewhat against thee: 't is that there be among you men that hold the doctrine of Balaam,[5] who taught Balac to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, that they should eat things sacrificed unto idols and commit fornication. So hast thou, also, them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaïtes. Repent; else will I come to thee quickly, and will fight against them with the Sword of My mouth.

"He that hath ears let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Hidden Manna, and I will likewise give unto him a white stone, and on this stone shall be written a new Name which none knoweth save he that receiveth it.[6]

"Unto the Angel of the Church of Thyatira,

[1] Probably this number ought to be taken literally. Their trial would be severe, but of short duration.

[2] The first death separates the soul from the body; the second entombs both body and soul in Hell.

[3] Pergamus boasted of a far-famed Temple of Æsculapius (Tacitus, *Annales*, iii. 63); but it was not so much the throngs attracted thither by this sanctuary of the God of Healing, as it was the fanaticism of its citizens which won for this city the name of "Satan's Throne."

[4] Two Bishops of Cesaræa in Cappadocia, Andreas and Arteas, in the ninth century still had in their possession the *Acts* of this holy Martyr. (*Commentaria in Apocalyps. in loco.* Migne, *Patrol. græc.*, vol. cvi. pp. 237 and 535.) The Martyrologies tell us that Antipas perished inside a brazen bull heated red hot. *Acta Sanctorum*, April, ii. pp. 3–5. Tillemont, *Mémoires*, ii., Persécution de Domitien, p. 119, and note, p. 523.

[5] Numbers xxiv. xxv.

[6] The mysterious Manna is the bread wherewith the Angels are fed (Ps. lxxxvii. 25). The name, written on a white stone, in token of forgiveness and triumph, is the Name wherein, for the Christian, all is summed up, — Jesus, Whom only those know who, having received it by their Faith, and made one with Him by their Charity, taste and see how sweet it is to such as love Him. (Ps. xxx. 20.)

"These things saith the Son of God, He that hath eyes like flame, and feet like unto sparkling brass: —

"I know thy works, and thy love, and thy faith, and thy charity for the poor, and thy patience, and thy last works which exceed the former. But I have this against thee that thou sufferest the woman Jezabel,[1] who calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to lead My servants to commit fornication, and to eat meats sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to do penance and she will not repent of her fornication. Behold I will cast her into a bed,[2] her and them that commit adultery with her, and I will overwhelm them in great tribulation, except they repent of their works. And I will kill her children, and all the Churches shall know that I am He that searcheth the reins and the hearts, and I will render to each according to his works. As for the rest of you at Thyatira, who hold not this doctrine, neither know what they call 'the Profundities of Satan,'[3] I will lay upon you no other burthen save to hold fast that which you have till I come.

"To him that overcometh and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the Nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and shall break them in pieces like earthen vessels, as I also have received power of My Father, and I will give him the Morning Star.[4] Let him that hath ears hearken to what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.

"Unto the Angel of the Church of Sardis,

"Lo thus saith He that holdeth the Seven Spirits of God, and the Seven Stars: —

[1] This name may designate either the Synagogue of Thyatira, or some Jewish congregation, which by its corrupting doctrines recalled the influence exercised in the time of Achab by his unworthy consort, the Phoenician Jezabel.

[2] I will afflict her with a fearful malady.

[3] A ruse common to all the Gnostics, Nicolaïtes, Valentinians, et al., was to delude their adherents into believing that the Higher Science, which they alone possessed, the *Gnosis*, was an unfathomable, inaccessible abyss: the *βυθός*. In a word, S. John illumines those depths which only impose on men by reason of the mysterious shadows enshrouding them; he unveils them and shows that naught lurks therein save their own evil genius, as ever corrupt and corrupting, Satan.

[4] Jesus is this Morning Star. Balaam had designated Him by that name in his Prophecy. "A Star shall rise from Jacob" (Num. xxiv. 17), and the Saviour Himself assumes the title at the close of the Apocalypse (xxii. 16): "And I Jesus, . . . I am the bright Star, the Morning Star."

"I know thy works; thou hast the name of being alive and thou art dead. Be watchful and strengthen that which is dying, for I find not thy works full before My God. Remember therefore how thou hast received the Word, and keep it, and repent. If thou dost not watch, I will come like a thief and thou shalt not know at what hour I will come. Nevertheless thou hast a few names in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments; these shall walk with Me clad in white, because they are worthy.

"He that overcometh shall likewise be clothed in white raiment, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life, and I will confess his name before My Father, and before His Angels. He that hath ears let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches.

"Unto the Angel of the Church of Philadelphia,

"Behold thus sayeth the Holy One, and the True, He that hath the Key of David, Who openeth, and no man shutteth; Who shutteth, and no man openeth:[1]—

"I know thy works; I have set before thee a Door which no man can shut; though thou art weak, yet hast thou kept My word, and thou hast not denied My Name. Behold, I give unto thee these people of the Synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie. Because thou hast kept My word of patience,[2] I also will preserve thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon the whole world to try them that dwell upon the earth. Lo, I come quickly! Hold fast that thou hast, that no man take away thy Crown.

"Him that overcometh, I will make a pillar in the Temple of My God, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon this pillar the Name of My God, and the name of the City of My God, the New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from My God, as also My new Name.[3]

[1] As Son of David, Heir to his kingdom (Luke i. 32), the realm of souls, Jesus holds in His hands the keys thereof; He opens and shuts as He sees fit.

[2] My bidding to fear nothing by My side, to have courage, to believe in Me without any hesitancy or any reserve (Matt. xxi. 21, 22; Mark xi. 24; John xi. 25; xiv. 1, etc.); to be steadfast and possess one's soul, whatsoever happens, with immovable patience (Luke xxi. 19).

[3] "The Name of My God," that is to say, "of My Father Who is your Father" (John xx. 17), of "our Father in Heaven" (Matt. vi. 9); very different was the God before Whom Israel trembled, Whose Name it durst not utter, Whom none might behold and live (Exod. xxxiii. 20).

Let him that hath ears hearken to what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.

"Unto the Angel of the Church of Laodicea,

"Lo thus saith the Amen,[1] the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:[2] —

"I know thy works, thou art neither cold, nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot! But because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to spue thee out of My mouth. Thou sayest unto thyself: I am rich, I am overflowing with goods, and have need of nothing; and thou seest not that thou art wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire,[3] that thou mayest be truly rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed,[4] and an eye-salve wherewith to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayest see. I rebuke and chasten them that I love. Be zealous, therefore, and repent! Behold I stand at the gate and knock; if anyone hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with Me.

"To him that overcometh I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also have overcome and am set down with My Father on His Throne. He that hath ears let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches."

Evidently the Seven Churches named in this letter do not comprise all the Christian communities of Asia: in

"The name of the City of My God," is no longer either that of the old time Jerusalem, or of the Synagogue, a cold and cruel step-mother, with steely talons, her bowels dried and dead, but the Church, the New Jerusalem, descended from the heavens to be the Bride of the Saviour and the Mother of all such as are His. "My new Name, which is none of those given Me by the Old Covenant — Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God, — but the Name which an Angel was sent from Heaven to bear to Mary: 'Thou shalt call His Name Jesus'" (Luke i. 31), the Jesus of the Manger, of the Eucharist, of the Cross.

[1] The Amen: He Who is of unchangeable fidelity, the Incarnate Truth.

[2] "All things were made by Him," we shall soon hear John say in his Gospel, "and without Him was made nothing that was made. In Him was Life" in its primal source (John i. 3, 4).

[3] Charity, purified by the inner fire which warms it; thereby freed of all egoism, all hypocrisy, all uncleanness.

[4] The garments the Apostle speaks of are those which S. Paul desired for his faithful followers in Colossæ: "Put ye on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, long-suffering . . .; above all put on love which is the bond of perfection." Coloss. iii. 12, 14.

the Valley of the Lycus alone two of the most illustrious are omitted, Hierapolis and Colossæ; elsewhere were Magnesia and Tralles, to which Saint Ignatius writes ten years later and which, assuredly, existed then. Nor is any mention made of the fraternities of Bithynia, to the North, which stood in as much, if not greater, need of being sustained, since there the Persecution was raging and lamentable defections had already occurred.[1] It has been hinted that the mystical meaning of numbers, which we encounter everywhere in Saint John's Revelation had something to do with the number of Seven Churches in his Epistle; but it seems equally proper to note that these communities are chosen in such wise that, in their person, the Apostle includes all the bodies of brethren in those parts.

The three named first stretch from North to South along the shores of the Archipelago: from Ephesus, the cradle of Christianity in these regions, the Apostles' thoughts naturally proceed to Smyrna, a city of equal importance; thence to Pergamus, a Church more menaced than any of the others, since Satan and Paganism were there enthroned. Passing thence by way of the cities of the interior, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, his gaze descends from the north to the south as far as the Valley of the Lycus and Laodicea, embracing in this circuit the whole domain won over to the Faith.

All this had been conquered by the Gospel during the thirty years that had elapsed since Saint Paul had departed from the coasts of Asia: thirty years of peace, during which Timothy, set over these new-born congregations, had been given leisure to oversee their growth, and especially to give to each its hierarchical form: over each of them a Bishop; under him, a body of Priests; then, the Deacons and Deaconesses. But, there as everywhere else, prosperity had been at its work of dissolution, undermining men's courage, enfeebling the souls that Persecu-

[1] "Alii ab indice nominati esse se christianos dixerunt, et mox negaverunt: fuisse quidem, sed desisse. . . . Quidam ante plures annos, non nemo etiam viginti quinque." Pliny, *Epist.*, x. 97.

tion had tempered for the strife and steeled against suffering. The peaceful conduct of life, and unhampered dealings with the Pagans had led them into strange compromises with their conscience.

John, coming to Ephesus in all the ardor of his faith, could not witness without grief this falling away from the ideal of Christian life; but the indolence and well-nigh complicity of the pastors moved him still more deeply. The Bishop of Pergamus, as we have just now seen, permitted the preaching of infamous doctrines; that of Thyatira gave full license to a prophetess who was likewise inculcating the disorderly views of Paganism. At Sardis, its Bishop, under a godly exterior, bore about sin and death in his heart. There was a similar state of decadence in Laodicea: the lukewarmness of its chief fairly turns the Apostle's stomach. But it is Ephesus which most deeply wounds him. In striking contrast to the other pastors, whose names remain unknown to us, we do know full well who then governed the metropolis of Asia. It was Timothy! Timothy, the friend of Saint Paul! It will be recalled what apprehensions the character of this disciple had given rise to in the mind of the Apostle.[1] Despite the fact that he loved him above all others and cherished the highest esteem for his faith, his piety, his devotedness, he dreaded lest that gentleness, which was his chief characteristic, might not degenerate into culpable time serving, even go so far at times as to paralyze the strength of hand, the promptitude and hardihood of counsel necessary to the Episcopate. "God has not given us the spirit of fear, but courage," he had written him. ". . . Be instant, therefore, in season and out of season, reprove, entreat, threaten, without ever wearying."[2]

Did he forget those tender admonitions, once the Apostle was gone? How far did Timothy yield to the promptings of his easy-going nature? The testimony of the Apocalypse allows of no doubt but that he had lapsed, both too widely and too deeply. It was a slackening of

[1] See *The Last Years of Saint Paul*, chaps. xi. and xii.
[2] 2 Tim. i. 7; iv. 2.

the former fervor, a fall[1] all the more dangerous now that with the torch of persecution new lighted, it behooved all, with the heads of the Church in the van, to stand on guard, prepared for battle and death. At such a crisis John proved himself worthy of taking the place of the Apostle to the Gentiles, for what he once had been he became again, in the moment of peril, "Son of the Thunderbolt."[2] This Timothy and the pastors of Asia realized when, from Patmos, the lightning shook the skies and startled them from their torpor. Their awakening was such as one might have expected in the Apostolic days: it led Timothy straight forth to Martyrdom. At the passing of one of those shameless processions which were the disgrace of Ephesus, the Bishop protested so energetically, that the mob fell upon him, and slaughtered him with a shower of stones and clubs.[3]

The Apostle chastens them so severely simply because he loves them,[4] with a love in nowise robbed of its impetuosity by its prevailing depth of tenderness. Of this the two Bishops of Smyrna and Philadelphia had ample proof. On the former John showers affectionate words of consolation, congratulating him on his poverty, which is great riches in God's sight, and on the wrongs and persecutions which are assailing him. Must he needs die thereby: then let him remain fearless and faithful, for He unto Whom belongs the first and the last word, He Who hath only known death to conquer it, He has set apart for His martyrs a crown of life. Still more touching is the Saviour's consideration for the Angel of Philadelphia. The head of this church, though "weak,"[5] unequal to the task set for him, lacking the natural gifts which are so helpful in the Apostolate, is therefore but

[1] Τὴν ἀγάπην σου τὴν πρώτην ἀφῆκας . . . πόπτωκας. Apoc. ii. 4.

[2] Mark iii. 17.

[3] The Martyrologies and the abridged *Acts* of this martyr, preserved by Photius, agree in representing the holy Bishop as falling a victim to the zeal he displayed in opposing the unclean festivals to which Ephesus had become wonted. These Acts place his martyrdom in the reign of Nerva, in the spring of the year 97.

[4] Ἐγὼ ὅσους ἐὰν φιλῶ, ἔλέγχω και παιδεύω. Apoc. iii. 19.

[5] Μικρὰν ἔχεις δύναμιν. Apoc. iii. 8.

the more devoted, more absorbed in God Who works in us to will and to do. Jesus will supply what is wanting in this humble pastor; He will reveal Himself in him, as One holding the key to men's souls, opening and closing them at will. "I will open the gates before thee," He tells him, "and no man shall be able to shut them."[1] Even the Jews of the Synagogue of Satan, everywhere else so stiff-necked, these will I make bow down before thee and they shall know that I love thee."

Like John, one must needs have fathomed the depths of the Heart of Jesus to be able to understand and repeat such words, and show the Saviour just as pitiful toward those who have deserted Him. "The Angel" of Laodicea appears to have been less worthy of His loving kindness; out of sheer disgust Jesus is fain to vomit him forth; and yet, 't is at his door that He stands and knocks, beseeching him to open, promising him, if he will but yield, to sit down with him at the banquet-board of eternal delights.[2] Everywhere, in the letter to the Seven Churches, as in the Visions which are to follow, we feel that the God Made Flesh is love, a love which nothing disheartens, nothing wearies: a divine feature of these mysterious and delightful pages, which makes them most dear to souls enamoured of Jesus.

[1] Apoc. iii. 8, 9.

[2] Apoc. iii. 20, 21.

CHAPTER VI.

THE APOCALYPSE.

JOHN wrote his letter to the Seven Churches, fully enlightened from on High, his very words dictated by Jesus Himself;[1] nevertheless it would not appear that, in this instance, the Apostle had been raised to such a pitch of supernal ecstasy that, forgetful of earthly things and altogether absorbed in God, he lost consciousness of his surroundings. Indeed he notes that it was on "a Lord's Day" that his soul was thus transported;[2] it is from behind him that he hears the Voice, like a trumpet; and that, on turning about, he beheld a figure more divine than human of aspect, reminding him of the picture drawn by the Prophets of the Son of Man.[3] He does not perceive with like lucidity the portentous visions which go to make up the bulk of the Apocalypse. "I looked," says the Apostle, "and I beheld a door opened in Heaven; and the first Voice which I had heard, and which had spoken to me with a blare as of the trumpet, said to me: Come up hither, and I will show thee the things which must come to pass hereafter."[4] Thus 't was into high Heaven that the Seer is this time exalted, there to stand face to face with the Divine Majesty. A Throne stands there in the midst; but John distinguishes only a dazzling light like the rays cast by sardonyx and jasper. Lightnings flash forever from that Throne; thunderous voices proclaim the Majesty of the Eternal, and a Rainbow crowns it, wherein prevail glints of emerald, the fadeless gleam of celestial hope; a sea of azure, trans-

[1] Apoc. i. 1.
[2] Ibid., i. 10.
[3] Ibid., i., 12, 13.
[4] Ibid., iv. 1.

parent as crystal, encircles the Eternal and isolates Him from the created beings who, afar off, form His Court.[1]

In the foremost ranks of these and at the foot of the Throne, appear the Angelic cohorts, represented by seven principal Spirits, whom Love Divine has enkindled, and are like seven lamps shedding light and lustre over the rest of Creation.[2] Round about, four animals, similar to the Assyrian "Cherubim" in Ezechiel, figure forth the sensible and corporeal world. The Bull denotes the forces of Nature, both in brute matter as well as in organized bodies; the Lion, the unconquerable activity of that Nature under its divine phenomena; the Eagle, with outspread wings, its nobler flights; the Beast with a human countenance, the intelligence which has so perfectly ordered it and is everywhere manifested. Though these prodigious creatures are of a type lower than man, every segment of this life renders homage to the Creator, by its readiness and vigilance in fulfilling the tasks assigned to it, which is indicated by the Six Wings, as also by the Eyes wherewith these mystical creatures are covered. In testimony of the harmony which maintains the universe in indissoluble order and union, day and night they sing with one voice unto the Triune Creator:

> "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty,
> Who was, Who is, and Who is to come," [3]

[1] Apoc. iv. 1, 7. Thus Moses and Aaron and the ancient writers of Israel beheld God "and under His feet as it were a paved work of sapphire, and as it were the sky when it is clear." Ex. xxiv. 10. In Ezechiel (i. 26, 28), God's throne resembles "a sapphire and it is surrounded by a rainbow. In all these agreeable colors of precious stones and rainbow tints, we see that God is clothed in a benignant majesty and a brightness pleasing to the eyes." Bossuet, *L'Apocalypse*, iv. 3.

[2] Apoc. iv. 5.

[3] As most expressive, to their thinking, the Assyrians adopted the form of the bull to signify strength; that of the eagle to denote agility; that of the lion to express power; the human countenance, to indicate intelligence, and they combined in a single subject the king of the domestic animals, the monarch of all wild beasts, with the sovereign of the air and the lord of creation. The "Cherubim" are, therefore, types of life itself, living creatures in the first degree, who render homage to the Author of all existence, in the name of all Creation, whose representatives they are, by their symbolic form, in its most lofty sense. (Vigouroux, *La*

These, however, are but speechless praises; it is reserved for His intelligent and loving creatures, to humankind, to give life to these encomiums: accordingly we behold them in the place of honor. As representatives there are Twenty-four Ancients: twelve of their number to recall the chosen ones among the Saints of the Old Covenant; the other twelve are the Apostles, the foundation stones of the Church.[1] As Pontiffs and Kings of creation, all are clad in white in token of their Priesthood, and, seated on thrones, bear crowns upon their brows. Nor is the act of Adoration complete until these Four and Twenty Ancients cast down their crowns before the Throne Divine, as a sign of homage, and, in the name of all Creation, give utterance to this prayer unto Him that liveth forever and ever:

"Thou art worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power because Thou hast created all things, and 't is by Thy will they were and have been created."[2]

FIRST VISION.

The Seven Seals.

[Apoc. vi., vii., viii., 1.]

Jesus has not, as yet, appeared in the Heavenly Vision. John, absorbed in contemplation of the Throne,

Bible et les découvertes modernes, vol. iv. part 4, book iii. chap. i. 1, La Vision des Chérubins). This is surely the meaning S. John gives to the four Animals, for, after having marshalled before our eyes "all creatures that are in Heaven, upon the earth, under the earth and in the sea," and telling us of the glory they give to God, he adds that the four mystical Animals did but utter their assent, saying *Amen* to what had been proclaimed by all creation, whereof they are a symbol.

[1] "'T is the whole Calendar of the Saints both of the Old and New Testaments, here represented by their heads and leaders. Those of the Old are contained under the Twelve Patriarchs, and those of the New in the persons of the Twelve Apostles. . . . The whole roll of the Saints is likewise represented below by the Twelve Doors of the Holy City, whereon are written the names of the Twelve Tribes, and by the Twelve Foundation Stones of that same City, whereon are written the names of the Twelve Apostles." Apoc. xxi. 12, 14. Bossuet, *L'Apocalypse*, iv. 4.

[2] Apoc. iv. 10, 11.

where, though invisible, the Majesty of the Most High is seated, now perceives a Hand holding a Book, roll-shaped, written on both sides and fastened with Seven Seals. "Who shall loose the Seals?" cries one of the Angels; but no one, either on earth or in Heaven, can open them, or even gaze thereon unblinded by its brightness. The Apostle is fain to weep at the thought that this Book, which should reveal so much concerning Jesus, His Kingdom, His speedy coming, — all that he most longed to know, should remain forever sealed. "Weep not," says one of the Ancients, and points out, midmost the celestial Court, a slain Lamb:[1] under this figure Jesus reveals Himself, Jesus the Paschal Victim immolated on the Cross; but this time it is not, as on Calvary, a bloody Sacrifice slaughtered for our sins; the Apocalyptic Lamb has Seven Horns and Seven Eyes, to show forth that the seven strong and watchful Spirits we have just noted at the feet of the Eternal,[2] are likewise His active and mighty ministers He goes up to the Throne "of the Lord Almighty," takes the Book and opens it.[3]

Forthwith the scene of Worship begins afresh in His honor, still more majestically. The Four Animals and the Four and Twenty Ancients, holding in their grasp harps and golden vials full of odors (the prayers of the Saints) fall down before the Lamb and sing unto Him a new Song: "Thou art worthy, Lord, to take the Book and to loose the seals thereof, for Thou wast slain, and, by Thy Blood, hast redeemed unto God the chosen ones of every tribe, and tongue and people, and nation; Thou hast made them Kings and Sacrificers to our God and they shall reign on the earth." Thousands of Angels join the glad acclaim, and their songs arouse the whole Universe. From the depths of the firmament, from sea and earth and its lowest depths, from the breast of every creature capable of loving, or at least of feeling, rise the

[1] Apoc. v. 1–6.

[2] "And there were Seven Lamps burning before the Throne which are the Seven Spirits of God." Apoc. iv. 5.

[3] Apoc. v. 6.

voices which embrace their supreme God and His Christ in a common Act of Adoration:

"Blessing, honor and glory and power be unto Him that is seated on the Throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever."

"Amen!" answers all Nature, represented by the four mystical Animals.[1]

But the hour has come to loose the mysterious Seals. On the opening of the First, a white horse dashes forth, its rider with crown on forehead and bow in hand leaps from victory to victory.[2] All that time which is to elapse between the advent of Christianity and the last days of the world is figured forth by this symbol: this period shall last until the moment when, in Hell's despite, the Saviour shall have carried the Glad Tidings over the whole world. Immediately thereafter appear the Plagues, forerunners of the last days. The Second Seal now broken, a red horse comes forth: — this is War; from the Third, a black horse, Famine; from the Fourth comes a horse pale as Death, gloomy as the grave; it has power over one fourth of all living things, to slay by the sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts.[3] When the Fifth Seal is loosed the Apostle's eyes behold the fearful persecution which shall precede the end of time: a veritable Altar of Holocausts, dripping with the Martyrs' blood, while, from below it, the souls of such as have given their lives for Jesus, send up to Him this loud cry: "How long, Lord, Holy and True, dost Thou defer doing us justice and avenging our blood?" Then comes the answer that they must needs have patience until the number of their brethren, destined like them to be put to death, be completed; but, as first fruits of victory, the white robes of the conqueror is given them, investing them beforehand with a glorious light.[4]

The promised vengeance is not long in coming. On the opening of the Sixth Seal, all the plagues foretold by the Saviour in the Gospel break loose at once. The earth

[1] Apoc. v. 8–14.
[2] Ibid., vi. 2.
[3] Ibid., vi. 4–8.
[4] Ibid., vi. 9–11.

quakes, the sun becomes as black as sackcloth of hair, the moon is the color of blood, the stars fall from the skies upon the earth, as a fig tree, shaken by a mighty wind, scatters afar its green fruit. The heavens draw away like a book which is rolled up; the mountains and the islands are shaken from their firm bases. Kings of the earth, rulers, men of war, the rich and the mighty, free men or slaves, all that have risen against the Christ hide themselves in the caves and rocks. They cry to the mountains, "Fall upon us,[1] hide us from the face of Him that is seated on the Throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, for the great Day of their Wrath is come. Who shall be able to withstand it?"[2]

All too well-founded are their fears, for the Angels stand at the four corners of the earth, ready to let loose the winds which shall overwhelm the persecutors in the depths below. And, notwithstanding, the order is given to withhold these destroying elements until the heavenly messengers shall have signed God's elect with His sign upon their forehead. The number of believers to be thus marked from among the house of Israel is definite and fixed, one hundred and forty-four thousand.[3] As to the chosen ones among the Gentiles, they seem an innumerable throng, of every race and people and tongue. Clothed in white raiment, with palms in their hands, they

[1] "The words are borrowed from Osee, x. 8, and Our Lord applies them to the desolation visited upon the Jews to avenge upon them His Passion." Luke xxiii. 30. Bossuet, *L'Apocalypse*, vi. 16.

[2] Apoc. vi. 12–17.

[3] It is self-evident that this is but a symbolical number. "In the numbers of the Apocalypse it behooves us to look for some certain mystical reason, whereby the Holy Ghost desires to rivet our attention more fixedly. The mystery He would here have us grasp is that the number Twelve, sacred alike in the Synagogue and in the Church, because of the Twelve Patriarchs and Twelve Apostles, multiplies itself by itself until it makes twelve thousand in each tribe, and twelve times twelve thousand in all the tribes together, in order that we should see how the Faith of the Patriarchs and Apostles is multiplied in their successors; while in the evenness of a number so perfectly squared, we note the everlasting unchangeableness of God's truth and His promises. For this reason we find (Apoc. xiv. 1, 3) this same number of an hundred and four and forty thousand taken as a number to represent the universality of the Saints." Bossuet, *L'Apocalypse*, vii. 4.

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chant the glory of God, and, bowing low, they worship Him.[1]

One of the Ancients explains the meaning of this multitude to John:

"These are they that have come out of great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the Throne of God and serve Him day and night in His Temple and He that sitteth on the Throne shall spread over them His tent.[2] They shall no more hunger, nor thirst; neither shall the sun fall on them, nor any heat annoy them, because the Lamb, that is in the midst of the Throne, shall be their shepherd, and shall lead them to the fountains of the waters of life, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."[3]

Only the Seventh Seal remains unopened. The Lamb looses it, and forthwith there is silence in Heaven about the space of half an hour. As all was consummated on earth, the opening of this last Seal could be naught else save a vision of Heaven. Nevertheless, the endless hour of eternal blessedness was not discovered in its full glory to the Seer's eyes. All that Jesus, in this first apparition, reveals thereof, is that a silence, an unspeakable peace, shall succeed the world's troubles.

SECOND VISION.

The Seven Trumpets.

[Apoc. viii., 2–13; ix., x., xi.]

"Blow ye the Trumpet in Sion, blow it loudly on My holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the earth tremble, for the Day of the Lord cometh, it is nigh: a Day of darkness and gloom, a Day of clouds and thick darkness."[4] This trumpet of the Great Day is one of the

[1] Apoc. vii. 1–12.

[2] Σκηνώσει ἐπ' αὐτούς; shall overshadow them, cover them with His Godhead as with a tent. The Apostle will recur to the same imagery in the Prologue to his Gospel: Ὁ λόγος ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν. i. 14.

[3] Apoc. vii. 13–17.

[4] Joel ii. 1–2.

most striking bits of imagery in the prophecy of Joel. The Saviour makes it a symbol which, under various phases, was to herald the events announced in the preceding Vision.[1]

Seven Trumpets are given into the hands of the Seven Angels that stand before the Eternal. But before the first is sounded, a majestic scene unrolls itself before the Seer's eyes: it shows him that the prayers of the Saints mount not up in vain to God,[2] and though the plagues, that are the forerunners of the last Day, will be the more terrible, yet, even here below, the Eternal Justice cannot always let the blood of His Martyrs go unavenged.

An Angel bearing a golden censer approaches an Altar of the same metal which stands before the Lord's Throne. Thereon the incense is scattered with a lavish hand and the smoke rises up to God: it is the prayers of the Saints. The Angel, filling his censer with the coals from the Altar, casts it upon the earth; scarcely have they touched the ground, when thunders, and earthquakes burst forth. The Seven Trumpets in the hands of the Angels now herald the succession of calamities.[3]

At the sound of the First, hail begins to fall, all fiery and mingled with blood; a third part of the trees is burnt up, every green thing consumed. At the sound of the Second, a great mountain of fire tumbles into the sea, whereof a third part becomes blood; a third part of the fish and the ships is destroyed. The Third Trumpet peals forth and forthwith a great Star falls all flaming from the skies: its name is Wormwood; it makes a third part of the waters so bitter that many men die. At the sound of the Fourth Trumpet, a third part of the sun, the moon,

[1] Apoc. viii. 1–2.

[2] "'T is only after the prayers and groans of the Saints, which were wrung from them by earthly persecutors, have mounted up to God, that the coals of His wrath fall like a thunderbolt. The Saints' prayers are so all-powerful, because it is God Himself that forms them, and it is thereby that the Saints enter into the accomplishment of all His works." Bossuet, *L'Apocalypse*, viii. 5.

[3] Apoc. viii. 3–5.

and the stars is extinguished, insomuch that, night and day, the world is wrapped in darkness.[1]

But this is but the prelude. An Eagle, flying athwart the sky utters thrice this foreboding cry, "Woe! Woe! Woe!" For, indeed, the last Trumpets usher in far more fearful calamities than the first.[2] At the sound of the Fifth, Hell opens and Satan, hitherto unseen, appears and enters the lists followed by a multitude of devils so strange and repulsive of aspect, that to convey some idea of them Saint John recalls to our minds the invasion of the hosts of locusts, of which the Prophet Joel gives such a striking description. Like those insects, the satanic hordes rise up from the offscourings of Hell, from the cesspool of the pit, whereof the key has been given to Lucifer, "the Star fallen from Heaven to Earth."[3] They come forth from those depths in legions, like a whirlwind of black smoke, and spread over the earth. Their rage is like that of horses which rush into the carnage. With men's faces, women's hair, lion's teeth, iron breastplates, scorpion's tails, wings clanging like chariots of war, — so the minions of Satan appear before the Prophet's horror-struck gaze.[4] The crown that encircles their foreheads is the insignia of their power over the human race: with the exception of the Elect, whom God safeguards, such license is permitted the fallen Angels for a certain space (five months), and, so cruelly do they make use of it, that their victims, now fain to call on Death the deliverer, are plunged in despair when even that is denied them.[5]

The name of the Angel of the dark pit who heads this Persecution, that of "the Exterminator,"[6] sufficiently in-

[1] Apoc. viii. 7–12. [2] Ibid., ix. 3, 10. [3] Ibid., viii. 10.

[4] Many of these features are borrowed from the description given by Joel of the inroads of locusts, which in his day ravaged Judea and which symbolized the invasion of the Assyrians: "Their teeth are like the teeth of lions. . . . The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses, and like horsemen they run. They leap . . . and 't is like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains. . . . Men are torn with fear and their faces pale." Joel ii. 4–7. Different, however, from Joel, S. John's locusts do not devour the trees and pasture lands like a fire. They torment their victims by an insidious venom, like scorpions.

[5] Apoc. ix. 1–10. [6] Ibid., ix. 11.

dicates its intensity ; at first, however, it would seem to be altogether spiritual and only does hurt to men's souls, for the mystical Locusts are forbidden to injure any grass of the fields, or the trees, or any green thing ; they only have power over such as have not God's seal on their brows, and these they may not slay, but only torture. It is at the signal given by the Sixth Trumpet that the bodies of these wretched human beings are delivered over to the infernal powers.[1]

Till then Four Angels of Darkness had been bound in chains to the banks of the Euphrates. Once set at liberty, these ministers of Satan set forth at the head of two hundred million horsemen in breastplates of fire and brimstone ; their horses, with lions' heads, likewise vomit forth fire and smoke and brimstone. One third of the human race is swept from existence under this fearsome assault,[2] forefiguring the corporeal onslaughts which shall ensue upon the seductions of mind and heart which the foregoing Trumpet had announced.[3]

Many details concerning this persecution were given to the Apostle, — precise details, too, for an Angel spread them before his eyes in an open Book ; terrifying, indeed, they were, for the voice of the divine messenger is like the lion's roar and his revelations burst from him like Seven Thunders.[4] John was starting to write, when a Voice from Heaven halted his pen. "Seal up what the Seven Thunders have said, and write it not."[5] We shall never know what that mysterious Book contained : all that we can conjecture is that upon its pages of blood and terror were mingled many a word of comfort. Do we not

[1] Apoc. ix. 4, 5. [2] Ibid., 13–19.

[3] This second invasion of two hundred million horsemen would seem to foretell that a host of barbarians will fall upon the world to exterminate a third part of mankind which shall have become the prey and slaves of the demons. God intrusts the task of directing this massacre to four tools of Satan ; with this purpose He had enchained them to the banks of the Euphrates, the stream of Babylon, the very citadel of the Devil and his unclean throngs. At the time set apart by Divine Justice, the barrier which, until then, has halted the invasion, is broken, Hell being forced to tear it away with its own hands.

[4] Apoc. x. 1–3. [5] Ibid., x. 4.

know that the Seer, when bidden to eat the Book, finds it at once strangely bitter and yet sweet as honey.[1]

The Angel of the Seven Thunders did not only impart oracles from Heaven that were vowed to secrecy; he declares that at the sound of the Seventh Trumpet, "the Mystery of God shall be finished," and he informs John that he may prophesy unto all, that now the great struggle which will precede the consummation of time, is at hand. This Revelation is made under certain figures familiar to the Apostle from a Vision of Zachary's.

To the Seer of old there had appeared two Olive Trees, overshadowing a golden Candlestick and emptying their oil into the Seven Lamps which crown it. Thereby it had been shown him that Josuë, the high priest, and Zorobabel, sprung from the royal stock of Juda, both of them anointed for their high functions by the Lord, were destined to be the restorers of Israel and its Temple.[2] "The Temple of God, and His Altar and His worshippers," [3] in other words, Holy Church, is in like manner the foremost object in view throughout John's Vision. The Apostle is bidden to measure this sacred precinct and to count the number of chosen souls therein,[4] lest any go astray and perish during the forty-two months [5] wherein the ap-

[1] Apoc. x. 8–10. [2] Zach. iv. 2–14. [3] Apoc. xi. 1.

[4] "Measure the Temple of God, and the Altar and them that adore therein." "This typifies the society of the Elect, wherein everything is measured and counted, because God wills not that anything perish therein. . . . The holy society of the Elect is inaccessible to the Gentile world, which can in no wise diminish it, but the exterior of the Church (the Porches outside the Temple) is in some sort abandoned to them, and there they commit their unspeakable outrages." Bossuet, *L'Apocalypse*, xi. 2.

[5] These forty-two months make three years and a half. Now this number, three and a half, recurs frequently in Scripture to designate a lapse of time which is shortened and restricted. The drought in Elias' day lasts three years and a half (3 Kings xvii. xviii.; Luke iv. 25; James v. 17); the persecution under Antiochus, a time, two times, and half a time, in other words, a year, two years, and half a year (Dan. vii. 25). These three years and a half, the half of seven, the number signifying perfection, denote an imperfect time which will not be completed. S. John uses it constantly with this design in his Revelations, and under many various forms. The two instances which occur in this chapter prophesy a thousand, two hundred and sixty days, which will give us if, like the Jews, we reckon thirty days to the month, the same number of

proaches to the Sanctuary are to be abandoned to the minions of Hell. In the course of this time, strictly reckoned and limited, the Church will find in the two orders which compose it two sorts of witnesses, Martyrs and valorous defenders. What Josuë and Zorobabel were to the second Temple, the Christian society and priesthood, the true anointed of the Lord, would be to the Church. They shall overshadow, like two Olive Trees, the two Candlesticks in the presence of the Lord of the earth,[1] shedding over them consolation and light. And their testimony shall triumph; for, like Elias, theirs is the prestige of uprightness, and they shall perform miracles as great as those of that mighty Prophet,[2] even as those of Moses himself. It is true, the Angel of the nether-world shall prevail for an instant over them and shall slay them, but their defeat will be of short duration (three days and a half). The spirit of Life once re-awakened within them, they will rise up on their feet, and a mighty Voice shall say to them "Come up hither!" into the heavens, where an eternal Kingship and Priesthood await them. "And they shall ascend up to Heaven in a cloud in the sight of their enemies."[3]

The second series of woes foretold by the cries of the Eagle has passed away, the third follows hard upon it.[4] At the sound of the Seventh Trumpet "all those that have defiled the earth are exterminated." This supreme execution is accomplished amid unheard of ravages, in the convulsion and crumbling to pieces of all Nature.[5] Mid-most the tempest, nevertheless, voices are heard raising this the Victor's Song. "The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever!" The Temple of God

years, — three years and a half (Apoc. xi. 3). Their bodies rest in the grave three years and a half (Apoc. xi. 9). The woman, who typifies the Church in the following chapter, is fed in the wilderness one thousand, two hundred and sixty days (Apoc. xii. 6). The power of the beast, risen from the sea, lasts the same length of time, forty-two months (Apoc. xiii. 5).

[1] Zach. iv. 3–14.
[2] Apoc. xi. 5–6.
[3] Ibid., xi. 12.
[4] Ibid., xi. 15.
[5] Ibid., xi. 19.

is opened in the heavens, and the true Ark of the Covenant, Jesus, appears therein, acclaimed the Conqueror, and, by His Holy Humanity, reconciling and restoring the world to God.

THIRD VISION.

The Church and Her Enemies.

[Apoc. xii., xiii., xiv.]

This Third Vision was the most important and the most complete of all the Revelations in the Apocalypse, since it displayed to the Apostle's gaze, not merely the end of days, but their succession as a whole, from the very first instant when God, going forth from Himself, in order to create, began by forming from the void the Angelic Choirs. From that very hour of Creation's dawn, the Mystery of the Incarnation was revealed to these pure Spirits as it must needs be accomplished: God choosing to unite himself hypostatically to the work of His own hands, not to any one of the Angels, but to a creature inferior to them, a Son of Man. This, in the opinion of illustrious theologians, was the trial by which their Faith and obedience were tested. They, that hitherto had seen naught above them save the Eternal, were commanded to worship beforehand the Word made Flesh in the womb of Mary. The majority bowed down in all humility, but many others rebelled, and thereby condemned themselves everlastingly: thus came to pass the division between good and evil spirits.[1]

The beginning of the Third Vision would seem merely to portray that great upheaval which troubled the first hours of time and divided the Angels into two opposing camps: the one madly bent on destroying Humanity, the object of their jealousy; the other all the more eager to defend it now that it seemed more threatened. A woman, symbolical of that humanity in its most perfect accom-

[1] Cornelius a Lapide, *Comment. in Apoc.*, xii. 4; *Suarez*, iii. vol. ii. Disput. 31, sect. 4, § *Ex his ergo.*

plishment, to wit, the Church, appears to Saint John as a Woman with child. She is garmented in the Sun, to betoken that Jesus, living within her, penetrates her with His rays divine; under her feet she holds the Moon (for a figure of the fickleness of human things) and Twelve Stars enwreathe her brow; these are the Saints of the two Testaments, Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, who compose this insignia of glorified Motherhood. John hearkens as she utters the cry of a woman in travail.[1]

But behold how beside this Woman, mystic image of the Church, rises Satan, her first and foremost foeman. He displays himself in the guise of a blood-red Dragon, with Ten Horns, and Seven Heads encircled with diadems,[2] emblems which denote his power, the empire which his superior natural gifts lend him over the lower world, and at the same time over the multitude of his satellites. Of a truth, in his fall, he had dragged down with him a third of the Stars of Heaven, a third part of the Angels. He halts before the Woman, prepared to devour the babe she gives birth to. Futile hope! From its first breath this infant displays its vigor; for it is the Christian people that the Church has begotten, the throng of baptized believers, who, as united to the Christ as is the Body to the Head, partake in all that belongs to their divine Saviour, His Life, His Powers, His Mysteries; by their communion in the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus, "they are taken up to God and sit upon His Throne."[3]

The Church regenerated after this fashion in the Christ, powerful as she is, is not left alone in her struggles against the hordes of Hell: the good Angels aid her. To them, indeed, God has given charge to hurl Lucifer from the heavenly heights and to put the Church out of his power. "Then there was a great battle in Heaven; Michael and his Angels fought with the Dragon, and the Dragon

[1] Apoc. xii. 1, 2.

[2] The ten horns, being symbolical of strength and royalty, would seem to indicate ten principal epochs wherein Satan and the world shall reign; by the seven heads John probably designates the seven deadly sins.

[3] Apoc. xii. 3–5.

fought together with his Angels. But these were the weaker, and their place is not found any more in Heaven. And that great Dragon, the Serpent of old, who is also called the Devil and Satan, he that seduces all the habitable earth, was cast down unto the earth and his Angels with him. And I heard a loud Voice in Heaven saying, Now is come the Salvation, the Power and Kingdom of our God and of His Christ, because the accuser of our brethren, he who accused them day and night before our God, is cast out. And they overcame him by the Blood of the Lamb, and by the testimony they have given to His Word, and have scorned their lives even unto the suffering of death. Therefore rejoice, O Heavens and ye that dwell therein! Woe to the Earth, and the Sea, because the Devil has come down to you, filled with mighty wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time."[1]

By the words Earth and Sea, whereon John says Hell's Sovereign might still vent his rage, he means us to understand all such souls as, not being consecrated by Baptism and Faith in the Christ, remain outside the Fold guarded by the Angels. Woe to this world of unbelievers, for over them Satan retains all the superiority belonging to him by angelic birthright. As to the mystical Woman of the Vision, ascending with an eagle's flight, she escapes the infernal Serpent now reduced to crawl upon the ground. Doubtless the refuge-place, set apart for her by God here below, is but a Wilderness, "a Desert,"[2] in comparison with her heavenly home; nevertheless the Church lives there, receiving as nourishment that Grace which supports within her the Life Divine: there, too, she can withstand the oft-repeated attacks of Hell, and patiently await their ending; for, twice in the course of the Vision, certain mystical numbers indicate that, because of His chosen ones, God will shorten the period of their probation.

Held in check by the Holy Angels and, on the other hand, realizing that he is not strong enough to assail the

[1] Apoc. xii. 9–12. [2] Ibid., 6–14.

Church directly, Satan resolves to raise up other enemies against her. John depicts him to us as halting on the borders of the Sea,[1] a figure of the ceaseless agitation of human things, and, lo, from the depths of that Sea there rises a Beast of weird aspect;[2] its uppermost parts are every-way similar to the Red Dragon: — Seven Heads, Ten Horns, Ten Diadems upon these Horns, and names of Blasphemy on the Heads.[3] In token of its craftiness, it has the leopard's coat; bear's feet to indicate its ferociousness; the lion's mouth, symbolizing its strength.[4] It is the World he figures under the form of this Beast, that world so often condemned by Jesus, wherein men live only for pleasure and gain, with no God save their own evil instincts.

The idolatrous and persecuting Empire of Rome was the first of the Seven Heads of the Beast.[5] On beholding it receive its deathblow in the reign of Constantine and giving place to Christianity, one might well fancy that the profane world, the enemy of the Christ, had disappeared forever, but, alone and unaided, human corruption has ever sufficed to maintain life and vigor in it. From age to age, we have seen the hideous Heads of the world rise up afresh,[6] and the earth yielding to its spells of enchantment, worshipping both it and the Dragon who gives it its powers; the power "of blaspheming God, His Name, His Tabernacle;" the power of waging warfare against the Saints and sometimes of vanquishing them; a power over every tribe, every tongue, every people, every nation; a power as efficacious in our day as in ages gone by, for, be-

[1] Apoc. xii. 18. [2] Ibid., xiii. 1.

[3] "Daniel likewise makes his Four Beasts, signifying four empires, also rise from the sea. These Empires rise from the Sea, that is to say, from the fluctuation of human things, which is figured by the sea tossed by the winds (Dan. vii. 2). Hence it comes that when speaking of the peacefulness of the age to come, S. John says that there shall be no more any Sea" (Apoc. xxi. 1). Bossuet, *L'Apocalypse*, xiii. 1.

[4] Apoc. xiii. 2.

[5] "Hoc notandum quod feritas atque crudelitas in Scripturis bestiarum nomine demonstretur." S. Jerome, *In Daniel*, vii. 2–8.

[6] "And I beheld one of his Heads, and it was wounded to death." Apoc. xiii. 3.

fore our very eyes, the world continues to exercise such fascinations, that with the exception of the Elect inscribed in the Book of Life of the Lamb, all the inhabitants of the earth seem to adore it.[1] This its victory, a stumbling-block to the weak-spirited, does, however, but act as a trial of the Faith and patience of the Saints; the hour will come when he who has been leading men into captivity, will in turn know captivity; when he that killed by the sword shall die by the sword;[2] and that Day draws nigh apace; the power allotted to Hell's legions has its bounds, a season which God shall shorten. Here, as elsewhere, the mystical number two and forty months gives us the clue.[3] And, notwithstanding, it will not come to an end until after a supreme assault has been made upon the Church.

This last outburst of infernal rage is marked by the appearance of a Second Beast, which does not, like its predecessor, symbolize a creation of the imagination, but represents and figures forth a personage who shall embody in himself hatred of the Christ. Saint John expressly states that this Antichrist shall have a man's existence and name, that he is to be the False Prophet above all others.[4] To win his dupes, he will assume the countenance of the Lamb Divine, — the two Ram's Horns, typifying strength: but he will speak like the Dragon and, like him, he will employ his power to make men worship the First Beast, that sinful world which lies mortally wounded and fairly exhausted by the warfare waged against it, all down the centuries, by the Church; but, thanks to Antichrist, it shall revive, stronger than ever, at the end of Time. Bewitched by the wonders worked by this impostor, overawed by his deeds of violence, the dwellers on earth will fall under his sway. He will make them all, great and small, rich and poor, freemen and slaves, bear

[1] Apoc. xiii. 4–8. [2] Ibid., xiii. 10.

[3] Apoc. xiii. 5. These two and forty months actually make three years and a half, and it is well to recall again that three and a half, being the half of seven, the number signifying perfection, indicates a length of time that has been restricted and curtailed.

[4] Apoc. xiii. 18; xvi. 13; xix. 20; xx. 10.

the characters of the Beast in their right hands and on their foreheads, and none may either buy or sell save such as shall show the characters of the Beast[1] or the Number of its name.[2] Thereby is foretold, long since, the sovereign sway wielded by the impious sects, at divers periods in the Church's history, and which, in our own day, they exercise over laws and governments. This tyranny, however, shall not have full scope until the day of the Antichrist. When is this season of world-wide seduction to occur? There is no answer to this question in the Vision; there is, though, this sign whereby men may discern its approach. The number six hundred and sixty-six will be found in the name of the Antichrist, and this name will be that of the First Beast. Vague as this designation may seem, it will be enough for the wise Christians that watch and pray, according to the Master's behest, to enable them to recognize the Antichrist and beware of his snares.[3]

The Apocalyptic scene here changes suddenly. Heaven opens before the Apostle's eyes, and displays a throng of elect whom this wise vigilance has saved from the artifices of Satan and his tools:

"And I beheld, and, lo, the Lamb was standing upon Mount Sion and with Him an Hundred and Forty-Four

[1] "To devote themselves to certain gods, the Pagans were wont to bear their peculiar sign branded with a hot iron on the wrist or on the brow; others had placed there the names of the gods or the first letters of those names, or the number which composed the numeral letters found in them. In alluding to this custom S. John represents, by the men branded by these characters, all such as devote themselves to idolatry and idols." Bossuet, *L'Apocalypse*, xiii. 16.

[2] Apoc. xiii. 11–17.

[3] "Cum tam varia afferantur, quae hunc numerum 666 reddant, et multo plura afferri possint, nec ulla exstet revelatio, quae certum Antichristi nomen explicet et determinet, temerarium est definire quodnam ex omnibus reipsa futurum sit, præsertim cum S. Joannes studio illud subticuerit. Ideo ergo tantum hunc nominis ejus numerum 666 affert, ut cum natus et nominatus fuerit Antichristus, omnes ex hoc numero nomini ipsius respondente, illudque adæquante, et ex aliis signis, tum hoc capite et præcedente a Joanne, tum a Daniele (cap. vii. et xi.) tum a Paulo (2 Thess. cap. ii.) allatis, colligant illum esse Antichristum." Cornelius a Lapide, *In Apocalyps.* xiii. 16.

Thousand,[1] that had the Name of His Father written on their foreheads; and I heard a Voice coming from Heaven, as a Voice of many waters and as a Voice of thunder, and the Voice which I heard was like that of harpers harping their harps. They sung a new Song before the Throne, and the Four Animals and the Ancients. And no man could learn that Song but the Hundred and Four and Forty Thousand which were redeemed from the earth. . . . These are they which were not defiled with women, for they are Virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth; these were purchased from among men to be the first-fruits to God and to the Lamb." [2]

Nor are the Angels content to remain inactive during this great and supreme combat. Saint John beholds them descending from Heaven and flying to the aid of the Faithful. One, holding in his hand the eternal Gospel, proclaims its Message for the last time to all the inhabitants of earth;[3] another points to the overthrow of that city, the mother of all impiety and all corruption, Babylon, "the great city which hath made all nations to drink of the wine of the fury of her fornications."[4] A third Angel follows, crying with a loud voice: "He that shall worship the Beast and shall bear his character on his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of God's wrath, poured out without mixture in the cup of His wrath, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, before the Holy Angels and before the Lamb. And the smoke of their torments shall ascend up for ever and ever, and they shall have no rest, neither by day nor by

[1] "This is the number consecrated to the whole catalogue of the Saints . . . the number Twelve; the root of this is held sacred alike in the Synagogue and in the Church." Bossuet, *L'Apocalypse*, xiv. 1.

[2] Apoc. xiv. 1–4.

[3] Ibid., xiv. 6.

[4] Which will be this great city, — the centre and stronghold of impiety in the last days? That must remain a secret of the future; but it will bear the same outward characters as Rome, or as Babylon; like them mighty and haughty, a ruling power, its one desire to persecute the Saints.

night, who have adored the Beast and its image, and have borne the characters of its name.[1]

Have patience, then, O Saints! Keep "the Commandments of God and the Faith in Jesus,"[2] for lo, the season of judgment, the season of blessedness and rest, approaches for them that die in the Lord. The Son of Man appears on a white cloud, a crown of gold upon His head and in His hand, a sharp Sickle.

"Thrust in Thy Sickle and reap," cries one of the Angels, "for the time for reaping is come."

The Sickle is thrust over the earth, and the good grain of the Elect is harvested in the eternal granaries. A second Sickle is put in the hands of another Angel to vintage the earth's vineyard; its impure fruits, symbols of the reprobate, are cast into the great wine-press of God's wrath, to be trodden out in the press.[3] So great is the number of the wretched creatures thus crushed, that their blood, overflowing the vats, spreads round about to a distance of a thousand six hundred stadia[4] and rises to the horses' bridles.

[1] Apoc. xiv. 8–12.

[2] Ibid., xiv. 12.

[3] "Let the Nations be awakened and go up to the Valley of Josaphat, for there will I sit to judge all the Nations round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get ye down, for the press is full; the vats overflow, for their wickedness has reached its measure. Ye Peoples, O ye Peoples, come unto the Valley of Judgment, for the Day of the Everlasting is nigh; come ye unto the Judgment." Joel iii. 12–14.

[4] "Purposely exaggerated to typify the great quantity of blood shed and the extent of territory laid waste." Bossuet, *L'Apocalypse*, xiv. 20.

CHAPTER VII.

THE APOCALYPSE (*Second Part*).

FOURTH VISION.

The Seven Vials.

[Apoc. xv., xvi., xvii., xviii., xix., 1–10.]

"AND I saw another Sign in Heaven, great and marvellous: Seven Angels bearing Seven Plagues, the last of all, whereby the Wrath of God is fulfilled." [1]

This opening of the narrative of the Fourth Vision shows us how John's attention was called anew to the last days of the world and to the calamities which were to foretell, as well as accomplish, the final outcome of all things. Nor is the Apostle the sole onlooker at these scenes of terror. From the Heavenly heights extending beneath them, like a crystal sea afire, the Elect who have already vanquished the Beast behold the last battles of the Church Militant; God's harps in their hands they intone, to uplift their comrades' courage, the chant once sung by Moses at the passage through the Red Sea [2] and the Canticle of the Lamb:

"Great and wonderful are Thy works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true are Thy ways, O King of the Nations! Who shall not fear Thee, Lord, and who shall not glorify Thy Name? All the Nations shall come and bow down before Thee, because Thy judgments are manifest." [3]

Seven Angels, clad in linen and girt about the breasts with golden girdles, come forth from the depths of the

[1] Apoc. xv. 1. [2] Exod. xv. [3] Apoc. xv. 2–4.

Divine Counsels, figured by the Tabernacle of the Testimony. One of the Four Animals puts in their hands Seven Vials of gold, full of the Wrath of God Who liveth forever and ever, and forthwith plague after plague overwhelms the whole world.[1]

The First Angel pours out his Vial upon the earth, and immediately a noisome and horrible sore attacks all men that wear the character of the Beast and worship its image.

The Second Angel pours out his Vial upon the sea, and the sea is changed to blood, and every living thing therein perishes.

The Third Angel pours out his Vial upon the rivers and upon their springs, and only blood flows therefrom. And the Angel of the Waters can but bow in acquiescence to the justice of this punishment, saying,

"Thou art just, Lord, Thou art holy in that Thou hast judged these things. For they have shed the blood of the Saints and the Prophets, wherefore Thou dost give them blood to drink. They are worthy of this."

The Fourth Angel pours out his Vial upon the sun, and the sun's heat becomes so fierce that men are scorched by it.

The Fifth Angel pours out his Vial upon that very spot where the Beast is enthroned, in the very heart of its kingdom; thereupon darkness settles upon it, a darkness so terrifying that men, in mad affright, gnaw their tongues in bitter anguish. And, notwithstanding, none of them repents.[2]

The Sixth Angel pours out his Vial upon the Euphrates, which dries up and opens a highway to the Kings of the East. The Parthians were then the terror of the Roman Empire. Under this imagery, so familiar to his contemporaries, the Apostle foretells the wars, the great invasions which shall devastate the world at the end of Time, making it a scene of carnage only to be likened to Megeddi,

[1] Apoc. xv. 6–8. [2] Ibid. xvi. 1–11.

that Valley of baleful augury where so many a time Israel's blood had been spilled.[1] So suddenly shall these irruptions of the barbarians take place, that it is befitting to recall once more the Master's words: "Lo, I come as a thief.[2] . . . Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and men see his shame."[3]

The Seventh Angel pours out his Vial: "It is done!" cries a great Voice from the celestial Throne, whereupon at once the Plagues act in concert, lightnings, rumblings, thunder, hailstones a talent in weight; the earth trembles as never it had before; the islands flee away, the mountains disappear.[4]

But one remnant of this stricken world survives; but this wreckage is the very heart of the Satanic Empire, that Great Babylon which God holds in reserve, that it may drink to the full of the wine of the indignation of His Wrath.

"Come!" John hears one of the Angels that had the Vials say to him; "come, and I will shew thee the condemnation of the great Harlot . . . with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and who hath made the inhabitants of the earth drunk with the wine of her fornication."[5]

John perceives this Woman seated on a Scarlet Beast with Seven Heads and Ten Horns. This Beast, covered

[1] Τὸν τόπον τὸν καλούμενον Ἑβραϊστὶ Ἁρμαγεδιών. The Vulgate has preserved, without translating it, the prefix "*Mar*," which means a mountain, making it "Armagedon = Mount Megedon." Megeddo was celebrated in Hebrew story for the great slaughter that had occurred there (Judges iv. 7, 16; v. 19); there Ochozias and Josias perished (4 Kings ix. 27; xxiii. 29) and the loss of the latter was followed by the great disasters described by Zachary (xii. 11).

[2] Matt. xxiv. 43.

[3] Apoc. xvi. 12–16.

[4] Ibid., 17–21.

[5] In the Scriptures, prostitution is the chief characteristic of idolatry: "Tyre prostitutes herself to the Kings of the earth" (Is. xxiii. 17). Nineveh is branded in the same terms: "a seductive courtesan, an enchantress, that selleth nations through her whoredoms" (Nahum iii. 4). Jeremias berates Babylon in like manner: "Babylon is a golden cup in the Lord's hand, making all the earth drunken. The Nations have drunken of her wine, therefore the Nations are become mad" (Jer. li. 7).

with blasphemous names, and well known to us from the foregoing Visions, is the World, corrupt and corrupting. As for the Woman, she is clothed, like her peers, in purple, decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, and in her hand she holds a cup brimful of her abominations and impieties. The name, — that is, the Mystery, — written across her brows, reveals what she symbolizes: "Babylon the Great, Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the earth;" or in other words, as the Angel hastens to explain, "that Great City, queen of the Kings of the earth," in the time of the Antichrist, who in the hands of that arch-impostor shall be what once the ancient Babylon was to exiled Israel; what Pagan Rome was to the newborn Church; that wicked and corrupt centre whence the last persecutions should be launched against God's chosen ones. This Woman John beholds drunk with the blood of the Saints, the blood of the Martyrs of Jesus."[1]

"And seeing her," he says, "I was overwhelmed with astonishment." The Angel saith unto me, "Why art thou astonished? I will tell thee the Mystery of the Woman and of the Beast which carrieth her, with its Seven Heads and Ten Horns."

This Beast is the world and its Satanic Kingdom. Before the coming of the Christ, through her Hell had exercised great sway over the bodies as well as over the souls of men; by being made Flesh, the Word so far crippled the evil spirits that He might truly tell His disciples, "Now is the Prince of this world cast out,"[2] outside that Fold especially, wherein He shepherds and shields the baptized believers in Him; but, at the end of the world, this Beast shall rise from the pit where it has been bound in chains, and for a short but fearful space ravage anew; the Beast shall recover its oldtime sway, which shall be through the workings of the Antichrist; thereafter it shall sink back into perdition's depths never to rise again.[3]

[1] Apoc. xvii. 1–6. [2] John xii. 31. [3] Apoc. xvii. 6–8.

"The Seven Heads of the Beast are the Seven Hills whereon the Woman, 'Pagan Rome,' is seated; or rather," the Angel proceeds, "they are the Seven Kings,"[1] the seven reigns of wickedness into which this space of time is divided. Five of them have taken place and passed away, from the beginning of the world up to the advent of the Christ.[2] The sixth, which still lasts, is that of every ungodly power, which, since the Church's establishment, has arisen or shall arise against her, until the days of the Antichrist. The seventh reign is that of this false prophet, which "has not come as yet and, when it cometh, shall endure only for a season." But for the Beast itself, it would appear in the Vision as an eighth king, which after a manner, shares sway with the Seven aforenamed, and, of right, since the world of sin, which it typifies, penetrates and infects all the other reigns.[3]

"The Ten Horns of the Beast are Ten Kings," adds the Angel; ten kings that shall share the empire of the earth in the time of the Antichrist: like the Beast to whom they tender allegiance, "they shall wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them." Nevertheless, before they, too, disappear, God shall implant in their hearts and in the heart of the Beast itself, a fierce hatred of the Antichrist and of his Harlot, that mystical City which he has made the seat of his Empire. Beast and Kings shall fall upon her, and shall make her desolate and naked, they shall eat her flesh and burn her to ashes.[4] This is to be an appalling spectacle, never surpassed by the most famous disasters in the annals of Israel: accordingly, in describing it, the celestial messengers can think of naught save the lamentations of the ancient Seers,

[1] Apoc. xvii. 9, 10.

[2] These five reigns may be reckoned very variously, but the following division seems to me the simplest and most natural: the first, lasting from Adam's fall to the Deluge; the second, from the Deluge down to Abraham's time; the third, from Abraham to Moses; the fourth, from Moses to the Babylonish captivity; the fifth, from that captivity down to the days of the Christ.

[3] Apoc. xvii. 10, 11.

[4] Ibid., xvii. 12, 18.

viewing the utter annihilation of Tyre and the cities of the Euphrates.

"She is fallen, Great Babylon is fallen! She is become the habitation of devils, the hold of every foul Spirit, a refuge of every unclean and hateful bird, for all the Nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the Kings of the earth have defiled themselves with her and the merchants are waxed rich with her luxury. . . .[1]

"Come forth from Babylon, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye be not overtaken by her plagues! Her sins have reached unto Heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.[2] Treat her as she hath treated you;[3] from the same cup wherefrom she hath given you to drink, make her drink twofold as much. As much as she hath glorified herself and hath lived delicately, so much torment and sorrow give ye to her. 'I am Queen,' she hath said in her heart, 'and am no widow and I shall never see mourning.'"[4]

Lo, this is why her plagues shall all come in one day: death, mourning, famine; she shall be burnt with the fire because the Lord that judgeth her is mighty. And the Kings of the earth that have defiled themselves with her, and have lived delicately with her, shall bewail and lament her, when they see the smoke of her burning. Standing afar off, for the fear of her torments, they shall say, "Alas! Alas! Babylon, that great City, that mighty City! Thy condemnation hath come in one hour."

"And the merchants of the earth shall weep and groan over her, because no one any more will buy their precious stones and merchandise, merchandise of gold and silver, gems, pearls, fine linen, purple, silk, scarlet, and all thyine wood, vessels of ivory, jewels, brass, iron, marble, cinnamon, perfumes, aromatic oils, incense, wine, oil, fine flour and wheat, beasts of burden, sheep, horses, chariots, slaves and free men. . . .

"And the traffickers in all things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torments.

[1] Is. xxi. 9; xiii. 20, 22.
[2] Is. xlviii. 20 Jer. l. 8; li. 6.
[3] Jer. l. 29.
[4] Is. xlvii. 7, 8.

Weeping and wailing, they shall say, 'Alas! Alas! That Great City which was clothed in fine linen, in purple and in scarlet, decked with gold, with gems, and with pearls, how, in an instant, are all these great riches come to naught?'

"And all the pilots, they that make voyages on the sea, and mariners and such as are busied with vessels stood afar off. . . .

"Beholding the smoke of her burning . . . they cast dust upon their heads, and uttered cries weeping and sobbing. 'Alas! Alas! That Great City, which of her abundance hath made rich all that had ships on the sea, in a moment she is made desolate.'" [1]

To these lamentations of earth comes the answer, in the glad songs of the predestined, a gladness untroubled save by a lingering apprehension in the depths of their hearts that perchance the wicked city might rise from its ashes as so many times aforetime it had done. One of the mightiest of the Angels dispels these fears. Lifting on high a rock as huge as a millstone, he casts it into the sea, saying "Thus shall Babylon, that great city, be thrown down and shall be found no more at all." [2]

Now, at last, all is over with Satan and the world; joyous acclamations resound throughout Heaven's halls:

"Alleluia! Salvation and glory and power to our God, because He hath judged the great Harlot!"

"Alleluia!" re-echo the throngs of the Elect, and the smoke of the burning, which consumes the last vestiges of Sin, rises up for everlastingly. The heavens are thrilled at this sight, and while the Four and Twenty Ancients and the Four Animals fall down and worship the God that hath pronounced this just and supreme judgment, the Elect chant the triumphal hymn of Eternity.

"I heard it," Saint John tells us; "it was as the voice of a great multitude, like a voice of many waters, and mighty thundering, which said: —

[1] This lamentation is manifestly reminiscent of the xxvi. and xxvii. chapters of Ezechiel.

[2] Compare Jeremias li. 63, 64.

"Alleluia! For the Lord Our God, the Omnipotent, hath entered into His Kingdom. Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb is come and His Bride hath made herself ready; to her it was granted that she should clothe herself in fine linen of exceeding whiteness." This white garment is the virtue of the Saints.[1]

"Write!" says the Angel who was speaking to the Seer: "Blessed are they that are called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb!" And as he added, "These are the true sayings of God," John falls at his feet to worship him. "See thou do it not!" the celestial guide admonishes him, "I am but a servant of God like thyself and like thy brethren who continue steadfast in confessing Jesus: worship God!" And God in Jesus, for if, of a truth, we know that the Divine Breath animates this Prophecy, it is because it is "the testimony," the word "of Jesus."[2]

FIFTH VISION.

Warfare between the Word and the Beast.

[Apoc. xix. 11–21.]

But the Apocalypse is not simply, as we have but just noted, the Testimony of Jesus concerning the destinies of the Church and the world; it is the revelation of that divine Saviour in His most sublime Attributes: His Omnipotence, as Creator and Redeemer, His Kingship, His judicial power, His Priesthood, most of all, His Godhead. Long since that Divine Essence which He possesses in common with the Father and the Holy Ghost, has been manifested in the titles given Him in the first four Visions;[3] but in the Fifth, for the first time, the

1 Apoc. xix. 1–8.

2 Ibid., 9, 10.

3 "The Prince of the kings of the earth;" "the First and the Last" in all things; "the Principle of the works of God;" "He that liveth forever and ever;" "Who holds in His hands the keys of Death and Hell;" "the Holy One and the True." Apoc. i. 5, 17; iii. 14; i. 18; iii. 7.

Christ is called by His true Name: "the Word of God,"[1] that Word which was in God from the beginning, God, even as is the Father that begat Him. This Word, however, is not that of the eternal splendors, resting within the fecund Bosom of Omnipotence whence He proceeds without ever being detached therefrom; it is the Word made Flesh for our salvation, to aid us in our struggles against the forces of Hell and the world.

Here He appears to John with certain features rendered familiar to us by the foregoing revelations, as the Faithful and the True, that judgeth and fighteth justly.[2] This, however, was but a vague appellation; the object of the present Vision is to make its import clear and precise. On the forehead of the mysterious Personage, amid the diadems which crown it, is written His true Name: "Word of God," an incommunicable, ineffable Name, even as, to the Jews, was that of Jehovah; a Name which He alone that bears it can fully comprehend, since it declares that in Jesus is the Divine Being, the Godhead; now "no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."[3]

So soon as God reveals Himself in the Christ as personally working and combating for us, the defeat of Hell is assured. Everything foretells this from the opening lines of the Vision: the White Horse, the symbol of victory, whereon "He that judgeth and combateth righteously" appears; the Two-edged Sword proceeding from His mouth; His robe stained with blood; the menacing device He bears on vestment and breastplate, "King of kings and Lord of lords." So little doubtful is the issue of the strife, that an Angel, standing in the sun, cries with a loud voice to all the birds that fly in the midst of the heavens, bidding them hasten to the great supper of God:—

"Come . . . eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains of warfare, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of steeds and their riders, the flesh of free men and slaves, both small and great."[4]

[1] Ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ. Apoc. xix. 13.
[2] Apoc. iii. 7, 14.
[3] John i. 18.
[4] Apoc. xix. 14–18.

"And I saw," says the Apostle, "the Beast and the Kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the Horse and against His army. But the Beast was taken and, with it, the false prophet that had wrought the miracles before him, whereby he had seduced them that had received the character of the Beast and worshipped his image; these both were cast alive into the pool burning with fire and brimstone. The rest were slain by the Sword which proceedeth out of the mouth of the Horseman, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh." [1]

SIXTH VISION.

The Reign of a Thousand Years.

[Apoc. xx., xxi., 1–8.]

The preceding Vision showed us Jesus as our Captain leading us forth to battle against the hosts of Hell; that which follows is yet more comforting to our souls, since it reveals the fact that our most fearsome foe, Satan, is finally fettered, and that, henceforth, to the weakest of us that trust in our great Commander, victory is not only possible but easily within our reach.

It is after the coming of the divine Saviour that the infernal Dragon is thus overmastered. On that day, the Angel, who has the key of the dark pit, descends from Heaven, having a great chain in his hand. "He laid hold on the Dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a Thousand Years;" a mystical number whereby we are to understand the time that has elapsed, and which is to elapse, from the Birth of the Christ up to the advent of the Antichrist. During this entire period Satan, cast into the bottomless depths, shall there remain a prisoner, for the Angel "hath set a seal upon him that he should seduce the Nations no more, till the Thousand Years should be fulfilled." [2] And of a truth, over baptized believers faithful to the promptings

[1] Apoc. 19–21. [2] Ibid., xx. 1–3.

of Grace, Satan no longer has that power he had over the whole world before the coming of the Christ; he retains his dominion only over men who have surrendered themselves to him by sin.

Even over these, as we have seen, he can only retain his ascendency through the mediation of the World, still a redoubtable influence, truly, but one constantly combated by the Church Militant, secure of celestial reenforcements. Saint John describes these latter hosts forming above the faithful, still fighting here below, that imposing cloud of witnesses spoken of by Saint Paul.[1] He describes it as composed entirely of the souls of the Elect;[2] the bodies of these blessed ones do, indeed, rest in earth's dust and shall not take on new life till the end of the world at the Second Resurrection.[3] Their souls only, on the instant they are separated from their mortal wrappings, have known their First Resurrection and have entered into immediate possession of the glory and blessedness on High. To the Apostle these beatified souls appear as majestic and powerful as any earthly potentates: first and foremost "the souls of the Martys, those that have been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the Word of God;" then the souls of the Elect, who, though not forced to shed their blood, "have not worshipped the Beast, neither its image, neither have received its mark upon their foreheads or in their hands."[4] Seated upon thrones ranged round about the Christ, their Saviour, with Him they reign over the Church on earth, and over the world which envelops her in its corruption. They share His power of judging all things, and with Him they do judge. They share His Priesthood,[5] and it is especially by this that they aid and succor the Church Militant;

[1] Hebr. xii. 1.

[2] *Τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν πεπελεκισμένων.* Apoc. xx. 4.

[3] "The First Resurrection is that in which the Saints who die on earth, live again after a manner and begin a new life in Heaven, and the Second Resurrection is that wherein they are glorified in the body as in the soul." Bossuet, *L'Apoculypse*, xx. 5.

[4] Apoc. xx. 4.

[5] Ibid., 4, 6.

their prayers offered on that Altar which is Jesus Christ, commingling with the voice of Him that is always hearkened unto, thus obtain a power divine. "Blessed and holy are they that have part in this First Resurrection; the Second Death shall have no power over them, but they shall be Sacrifices of God and of Jesus Christ and shall reign with Him a Thousand Years."

Notwithstanding, the day will come, a day of direful portent, when these Thousand Years, reserved by God for the unhampered activity of the Church, having expired, Satan shall see his shackles fall from him and his prison open. In a supreme effort, wherein his two servile tools, the World and the Antichrist, shall employ all their wiles, he shall succeed in seducing the Nations, shall gather them together from the four quarters of the earth, and shall lead them forth to battle. So tremendous will the struggle be that godly Israelites will fancy that that awful hour has returned when Gog and Magog[1] overran Judea and deluged it in a sea of blood. The Camp of the Saints, that mystical citadel wherein the friends of Jesus[2] shall have entrenched themselves, will have to withstand a terrific assault, but one of short duration. God will intervene and send forth a flame from Heaven which will devour His enemies. Satan and the Beast and the false Prophet (the Antichrist), cast headlong into the lake of fire and brimstone, shall there suffer torments, night and day, forever and for evermore.[3]

[1] "Gog and Magog," in Ezechiel, are the hostile nations "which shall cover the earth, on whom God shall rain down fire and brimstone, and shall consume them in its devouring flames." (Ezechiel xxxviii. 14, and xxxix. 1, 6). "These names, made famous long years before by this Prophecy, are here recalled by S. John to represent those deceived and deceiving nations whereof Satan was to make use in his warfare against the Church at the end of time." Bossuet, *L'Apocalypse*, xx. 7.

[2] "They environed the Camp of the Saints and the Beloved City." Apoc. xx. 9. "Here we must understand a spiritual city, such as is the Church, a spiritual camp, which is the society of the children of God still clothed in mortal flesh and in the reach of temptation; consequently it is also a spiritual war, a combat of the soul, such as that which the heretics never cease to wage against us, one which shall be twofold as violent at the ages' close." Bossuet, *L'Apocalypse*, xx. 7.

[3] Ibid., 7–10.

A majestic Revelation of the Last Judgment brings this Vision to a close. A great white Throne looms upon the Seer's gaze, and on this Throne, the Christ, supreme Judge, apparelled in such splendors that earth and sky flee away overwhelmed with awe; and there is naught remaining of them. In this fearful void of all things, the sea gives up those it has drowned, Death and Hell likewise release their prey; the dead, both great and small, rise up on all sides to be judged, or rather to judge themselves, for the conscience of each one opens to the general view like a book, wherein his life, depicted in its slightest actions, spells the sentence of death for the damned, of never-ending happiness for the Elect. But still more reassuring for the latter is the appearance of the Book of Life: there the predestined read with gladness their own names. Whosoever is not inscribed in this Book is cast into the lake of fire, wherein at the same time Hell and Death are cast. For the reprobate this is the "Second Death," the death of body and of soul which lasts forever.[1]

And now, behold, in place of the vanished earth and sky, there appear a new heaven and a new earth, whereon there is no sea, neither any changes nor any storms. A Holy City, in like manner new, descends from Heaven, arrayed as a Bride for her Bridegroom, and a great Voice, proceeding from the Throne whereon is seated the Supreme Judge, says to the Seer: "Behold the Tabernacle of God with men, and He will dwell with them. They shall be His people, and God dwelling in the midst of them shall be their God. And He will wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more mourning, neither sorrow, nor crying, for the former things are passed away." And He that sat upon the Throne said, "Behold I make all things new!"

Manifestly it is the voice of Jesus that we are listening to. He bids John write down all these things. "It is done!" He adds; the whole work of God is accomplished; there is nothing left either to do, or to await or to long for here below; only Heaven is, and is unto all Eternity.[2]

[1] Apoc. xx. 11–15. [2] Ibid., xxi. 1–6.

SEVENTH VISION.

The Heavenly Jerusalem.

[Apoc. xxi. 9–27; xxii. 1–5.]

Heaven! One last Vision conducts the Apostle within its pearly gates. In such an ecstasy Saint Paul had been transported thither before him: rapt even to the Third Heaven, he had been vouchsafed an instant's foretaste of Paradise, "whether in the body or out of the body" he knew not; one thing he held in deathless memory, — that there he had heard unutterable things, words which it is not granted to man to repeat.[1] And therefore he must needs confine himself to saying with Isaias, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath the heart of man ever conceived that which God hath prepared for them that love him."[2] It had been reserved for the dearly-beloved Disciple to receive from Jesus a revelation of these divine secrets, fashioned under an imagery fitted to the weakness of our human comprehension, and thus give us some inkling of all that shall greet the gaze of the soul steadfastly clinging to the Saviour, on its awakening in Eternity.[3]

One of the Seven Angels that had had the Vials drew near to John. "Come!" he said, "I will shew thee the Bride, the wife of the Lamb." The very essence of everlasting blessedness was unveiled in that simple word. For what was its purport? No less than a union of the soul with all that is of God, His life, light, truth, beauty, love; nay, this does not express it, it implies a communion with that Being divine, in so far as the finite creature may grasp the Infinite, possess, and enjoy it. Now, no earthly union is more intimate than that of husband and wife; everything becomes their common property, their bodies, their possessions, their hearts, their thoughts. With good cause, then, may the Angel entitle every faithful soul the spouse of the Christ.

[1] 2 Cor. xii. 2–4. [2] 1 Cor. ii. 9. Isa. lxiv. 4.
[3] Apoc. xxi. 9.

Another no less expressive figure enables him to convey some idea of the admirable harmony prevailing among these holy souls. It is granted him to behold the ideal Jerusalem, a mystical City of such towering proportions that John must first be transported by the Angel to a lofty mountain ere his eye can grasp the scene. This City appears to him as coming down from Heaven, from the presence of God, Whose brightness illumines it. It is one blaze of splendors. Twelve great pearls form its gates; the City itself is all of pure and transparent gold o'er which a celestial light casts iridescent rays of jasper. In like fashion everything about it is harmoniously measured and ordered, brooded over by serene and inviolable Peace. In token of this immovable stability, the City is in the form of a square, and at every hand one encounters the number Twelve, a mystical number only applied in Scripture to a perfect whole. The Heavenly Jerusalem has Twelve gates, and Twelve Angels are the watchmen at these gates, over each of which is written the name of one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Its walls, which are twelve thousand stadia in circumference, rest on Twelve foundation-stones, each bearing the name of one of the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb. Twelve kinds of gems superposed compose this wondrous groundwork: the first is of jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, the fifth sardonyx, the sixth sardius, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprasus, the eleventh hyacinth, the twelfth amethyst.[1]

Evidently everything about this description is intended to be understood in a symbolical sense, notably the numbers and the precious stones. Despairing of putting into words this, the most sublime part of his Vision, and in order to depict it in consonance with our understanding, John has recourse to the harmonious proportions of numbers, the varied and delicate tints of precious gems. Till we see Heaven and are bathed in the full light of God, we

[1] Apoc. xxi. 11–21.

shall never discover all that the Apostle desired to convey thereby; but, while here below, nothing gives us a loftier notion of Heaven's blessedness than beholding John, the most enlightened and inspired of sacred writers, utterly powerless to express in human language the delights it holds in store for us. Thus, then, it remains, after as before the Apocalypse, an object of Faith and mysterious hopes. The chiefest thing, however, has been revealed to us, over and over again, by the Apostle: Heaven will consist in knowing, in Jesus and through Jesus, the Infinite Being in all Its fulness, in contemplating It unveiled and in being united to It in eternal love. God and the Lamb shall be our all in all, in the Celestial Jerusalem, and They shall suffice to enlighten all things, animate all things, beatify all. "I saw no temple in the City," John says, "because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the Temple of it, and the City has no need of sun or moon to shine in it, for the Glory of God doth lighten it and the Lamb is the Lamp thereof;"[1] a Lamp that sheds such bright rays that the nations, and even the kings of the earth hasten to its light. Nevertheless only such shall enter thither as have kept themselves unspotted by the world, their names written in the Book of Life.[2]

The Throne whereon John had contemplated the Divine Majesty at the first gleams, that same Throne now reappears. Thereon God and the Lamb are seated, reigning for evermore over Their handiwork, regenerated and saved by the Blood of the Christ. Therefrom They pour forth upon Their people a life divine. A stream of living waters gushing forth from that Throne is its symbol:[3] on its

[1] Apoc. xxi. 22, 23.

[2] Ibid., xxi. 27.

[3] The stream of living water figuring forth everlasting felicity is borrowed from a passage in Ezechiel (xlvii.) in which the Prophet describes this stream springing abundantly from the threshold of the Temple: "These waters issue out toward the east country and they descend into the plain and reach as far as the Sea; when they shall have been poured into the Sea, the waters of the Sea shall be healed . . . and everything whithersoever the River shall come shall live. . . . And upon the banks thereof shall grow all manner of fruit trees. Their leaves shall not wither, neither shall they ever lack fruits. They shall bring forth fresh fruit every

banks stands the Tree of Life, from which God had withheld the hand of fallen Adam, "lest he might eat thereof and live forever."[1] All shall have free access to that tree in the Paradise regained; in every one of the twelve months of the year, they shall pluck therefrom the fruits wherewithal to nourish the life everlasting within them; even from its leaves a virtue shall go forth to heal the wounds of original sin.[2] Thus, secure of immortality, the Elect shall relish, in the contemplation and enjoyment of God, a beatitude ceaselessly renewed; they shall be partakers, as members of the Christ, in the power, yea, even in the Sovereignty of the Lord; with Him "they shall reign for ever and ever."

Such were the Visions of Saint John during his relegation to Patmos. Though they were not composed, so far as we can judge, either at the same time or in the same place, the order of their occurrence could not fail to have engraven itself deeply on his memory. Accordingly, when once relieved of his heavy labor in the mines, it was a light task to gather together these recollections and from them form the book we now have. The Epistle to the Seven Churches alone was written at Patmos, and thence despatched to the Christian congregations which stood in such urgent need of being sustained as well as of being admonished, in the turmoil of tribulation. The rest of the work, by far the greater part, indeed, could not have been indited until, once more in Ephesus, the Apostle was free to occupy his mind in an orderly exposition of these prodigious appearances. Prefacing it, as it were, with his letter, which, in itself, was but a Prophetic prelude to the series of Seven Visions, he gave to the whole work the name it still bears, The Apocalypse:

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to make known to His servants the things which must shortly happen and which He hath made known by His Angel to John his servant."[3]

month, because the water issued out of the Sanctuary. And the fruits thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for healing."

[1] Gen. iii. 22, 23. [2] Apoc. xxii. 1, 2. [3] Ibid., i. 1.

We may presume that, according to the constant usage among the Apostles, the Seer of Patmos did not write down his recollections himself, but dictated them to certain of his disciples. The care he takes, in closing, to attest the authenticity of his Visions, authorizes this hypothesis: "I, John, am he that saw and heard these things,"[1] and he recalls what he had noted in his introduction, and still more expressly in the Vision of the Seven Vials,[2] that this Revelation had been given him from Heaven by the ministry of an Angel; but of an Angel so penetrated with the Spirit of Jesus, that he, no longer capable of discerning aught save the Divine Person who spoke by the mouth of His celestial Messenger, he, John, had cast himself at his feet and was fain to worship him. "See thou do it not!" the Heavenly one had said, "I am but a servant like thee, and like thy brethren the Prophets, and all them that keep the words of this Book. Worship God!"[3] And immediately, the divine Revealer, He Who is truly adorable, had manifested Himself to the Seer:

"I, Jesus, have sent Mine Angel to give thee testimony of these things in the Churches. I that am the Root and Stock of David, the bright and Morning Star. . . . I am the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."[4]

The Saviour, after His Resurrection, had said of His well-beloved disciple. "I will that he tarry till I come."[5] John, laden with years and labors, longed only for that summons: thrice in these closing lines of the Apocalypse, the Saviour tells him that He is near at hand. "Behold I come quickly . . . yea quickly. Surely I come quickly."[6] And this assurance was trebly sweet to the Apostle's heart; so is it likewise to all hearts athirst like his for a closer union with God. John re-echoes those touching appeals evermore exchanged between Heaven and earth, between the Spirit of Jesus and those souls which are betrothed to Him by the Divine Charity:

[1] Apoc. xxii. 8.
[2] Ibid., i. 1; xix. 9, 10.
[3] Ibid., xxii. 8, 9.
[4] Ibid., xxii., 16.
[5] John xxi. 22.
[6] Apoc. xxii. 7, 12, 20.

"And the spirit and the Bride say, Come! And he that thirsteth, let him come, and he that will, let him take the water of Life freely."[1]

Nor was the Apostle unaware of the risks his book would run in the hands of the Heretics who infested the Church of Asia; he had been a witness to their shrewdness in mangling and falsifying the most sacred texts, changing the Word of Life into pernicious sayings. Dreading their machinations, he threatens them with this anathema:

"I do protest unto all them that shall hear the Prophecy of this book, if any man shall add thereto, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book. And if any man shall take away any words from the book of this Prophecy, God shall blot him out from the Book of Life, and shall shut him out of the Holy City, and shall take away from him his portion in the Promises that are written in this book."[2]

Whereupon, with the Saviour's gentle summons resounding anew in his ears, "Amen!" he answers, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" And then he appends his final signature to the work:

"May the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the Saints! Amen."[3]

[1] Apoc. xxii. 17.
[2] Ibid., xxii. 18, 19.
[3] Ibid., xxii. 20, 21. "May God grant to those that read this Prophecy the grace to repeat in silence the last verses and taste in their hearts the delight of being called by Jesus and of calling on Him in secret." Bossuet, *L'Apocalypse*, xxii. 20.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE EPISTLE OF SAINT CLEMENT.

The mystic heights whither Saint John's Revelations had transported the thoughts of the Asiatic congregations were not the lowly levels, the goodly plains easy of approach, whereon Jesus had founded His Church. For this terrestrial domain of the Saviour the lightnings of Patmos were not nearly so needful as a firm, practical guidance, which should be accepted in a docile spirit, thus insuring peace and good order. Nor was this word of command wanting; at the very outset, it issued, as was befitting, from Rome, already become, owing to the authority lent it by Peter, the Metropolis of Christendom.

The Roman Church, more than any other, had been bowed down under the burthen of persecution: placed in the very clutches of the tyrant, it might well feel satisfied at merely escaping its pursuers, and, when that was impossible, content to face death valiantly; accordingly, during all those days that tried men's souls it was forced to remain shut up within itself, without taking interest or any part in what was going on abroad. But nothing could bring out in more striking relief the ascendency it had already acquired than the fact that, when hardly emerged from the storm centre, it forthwith resumes its dealings with the Christian world and therein assumes the same prerogatives which Peter and Paul had exercised over Christendom.

Corinth was destined to become the first subject, so far as we have any knowledge, to fall under the Roman jurisdiction. There had been no change wrought in the fraternities of Achaia since the time when Paul wrote his Epistles to them: always the same dissensions among the

brethren; always the same disputes concerning the Resurrection, the Agapë, and supernatural graces.[1] In their debates they went so far as to disturb the religious gatherings; for young men, and even women, were so bold as to start discussions there, with all the frivolity native to the Greek character, with all the excitability of their age or their sex.[2]

Still more fraught with peril for the presevation of the peace, were those members who pretended to possess certain supernatural illuminations. Such special gifts had been, without any doubt, vouchsafed to many, by reason of their godliness and faith; by distinguishing them from the mass of believers, these powers focussed the general gaze upon them and made them, so to say, a depository of the higher life, to which others went willingly for enlightenment. Men so highly looked upon fell an easy prey to pride and self-deception: at Corinth, a large number had yielded to this temptation.[3] Feeling themselves specially favored from on high, more far-seeing than the vulgar herd, they arrogantly held that theirs was the right and the duty to regulate all the affairs of their Church. Now it was not to them that Paul, on his departure from their city, had confided the ecclesiastical administration. There, as everywhere else, a body of priests had been constituted and fulfilled their functions with wisdom. The sturdy common sense of these pastors, their unswerving care to prevent any dangerous fallacy, were most displeasing to the Illuminati. The latter went to any extreme to discredit them; they even succeeded in deposing many of these venerable Elders.[4] This was, indeed, a serious disturbance and one which bade fair to ruin all discipline, for it rendered the Hierarchy, the stability of which had been so much desired by the Apostles, actually the plaything of popular caprice. Once apprised of the facts by the victims of these intrigues, or perhaps on its own ini-

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 35, 36; xi. 20–34; xii. xiii. xiv.
[2] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.*, i. xxi.
[3] Ibid., xliv. xlviii.
[4] Ibid., xlvii.

tiative,[1] Rome intervened with a vigor which shows how fully conscious it was even then of its supremacy.

The letter in whose every word the Christians of Achaia recognized the accents of the Mother Church, and which forms really the first in the long series of Papal Bulls, does not, however, bear on its title-page, the name of any pontiff; it is addressed to the fraternity of Corinth by that of Rome, as a body;[2] but tradition establishes the fact beyond any question that it is the work of the third successor of Peter, known as Clement.[3] We have already made the acquaintance of one Christian of that name, that illustrious victim of the Persecution under Domitian;[4] was it the same personage, who, as Bishop of Rome, wrote the Epistle to the Corinthians? Some writers of our day have wrongly supposed so, without any further foundation for their belief than certain writings of the Eastern Gnostics, who, in the third century, ascribed their romantic imaginings to Pope Saint Clement, and in order to extol their fancied hero, sought to confound him with his homonym, kinsman of the Flavians, Clement the Martyr.[5] Now everything we can ascertain would go to disprove this identity; in the first place, the silence of the Fathers, who, when speaking of Clement, the Pope, never make any allusion to this princely lineage;[6] thereafter, the Epistle itself, which one has but to read to con-

[1] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.*, i.

[2] *Ἡ ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ παροικοῦσα Ρώμην τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ Θεοῦ τῇ παροικούσῃ Κόρινθον.*

[3] Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth (166–175) in Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, iv xxiii. 11); Hegesippus (180), in Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, iii. xvi.; iv. xxii. 11). S. Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, iii. 3, 3. Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* i. 7; iv. 17–19; v. 12; vi. 8. Origen, *De Princ.*, ii. 6; *In Joan.*, i. 28.

[4] See above, Chapter IV.

[5] The reader will find these fabrications set forth at length in two productions falsely attributed to S. Clement: the *Twenty Homilies*, preceded by two apochryphal letters supposed to be written by Peter and James to Clement, and the *Recognitions*, a work in ten books, of which only the Latin translation made by Rufinus is now extant. These documents are to be found in Migne's *Patrologie Grecque*, i. ii.

[6] S. Irenæus, who visited the Roman Church about fifteen years after S. Clement's death, speaks of this Pontiff and makes no mention of his kinship with the Imperial House. Now can we suppose for an instant that such an extraordinary fact could have been so soon forgotten?

vince himself that it could never have been written by the Martyr Flavius Clemens. That member of the consular body, and near relative of the Emperor, spent his life, not only in the circles of the Roman aristocracy, but in the literary world of his day, in the company of Juvenal, Tacitus, the Younger Pliny and Quintilian, who became the tutor of his two sons.[1] There is nothing in the Epistle to denote that its author had enjoyed such advantages; neither its style nor its thoughts.

On the contrary any one must notice that he has been brought up on the Sacred Books and traditions of Israel, so much so, that his work is, as it were, a tissue of quotations from them.[2] Assuredly, he is not unversed in profane literature,[3] but he prefers by far to dilate upon the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, whereby his work is deeply tinctured. He must have been a Hellenist Jew, since he uses only the Septuagint, and this version is so familiar to him that he quotes it, not only textually, but with the interpretations given it by Jewish traditions.[4]

It cannot be denied that the name Clement has a Latin, rather than a Hebraic sound. The most common hypothesis is that some tie of clientship connected this Israelite with the Flavian family. Jewish slaves and freedmen swarmed into Rome after the subjection of their native land: what, then, could be more likely than that the Christian branch of the Flavians, from which the illustrious Flavius Clemens sprang, should have become the patrons of a Judaising Christian destined to be the successor of Peter?[5]

Though the pontiff's ancestry can only afford matter for conjecture, the same cannot be said of the important

[1] Quintilian, *Instit. Orat.*, iv. *Procem.*

[2] See the list of these citations, arranged by Funk, *Opera Patrum Apostolicorum*, i. 566–570, and Lightfoot, *S. Clement of Rome*, ii. 515–517.

[3] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.*, xx. xxv. xxxvii. lv.

[4] Ibid., ix. xi. xxxi.

[5] Lightfoot, by means of various happy comparisons, has lent great likelihood to this hypothesis. *S. Clement*, i. 60–63.

part played by Clement at the close of the Apostolic Age. Linus and Cletus, his predecessors, have left behind them nothing but their names; he was the first to give the world an idea of the rôle destined to be enacted all down the centuries by the Roman Pontificate. His letter, though intended solely for the Corinthians, soon overpassed that narrow circle, was much sought after by all Christian congregations and read at their meetings[1] with the same respect they tendered to the writings of the Apostles.[2] Nor did they confine themselves to using it for liturgical purposes, or to quoting it frequently and committing it to memory.[3] Following the lines laid down by Peter and Paul, Clement had given the Corinthians many useful counsels, reminding them especially how the Apostles had ordered the government of the Churches. Thus it came about that the earliest writers who laid the foundations of our Canon Law, modelled their work after his pattern; nay, more; certain writers felt that there was no surer way of lending authority to their works than by issuing them under his name. Hence we have the long list of works attributed to this pontiff, with which we need not busy ourselves here since they are all apochryphal: a *Second Epistle to the Corinthians;* the *Two Letters on Virginity;* the *Clementine Homilies,* and a great array of Gnostic romances and fictitious *Constitutions* tagged on to them.[4] Sane criticism has stripped the fantastic habiliments from the historical figure of Saint Clement; but

[1] S. Dionysius, in Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, iv. xxiii.). Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. xvi. xxviii. S. Jerome, *De Vir.*, 15.

[2] Three manuscripts containing S. Clement's letter have come down to us: the *Codex Alexandrinus* in the British Museum, the manuscript, discovered in 1875, in the library of the Phanar, and the Syriac Version, which, about the same time, passed from the Mohl Collection into the library of Cambridge University. In two out of the three above named, *Alexandrinus* and the Syriac Version, the Letter to the Corinthians is found either appended to or inserted among the various Books of the New Testament.

[3] See the list of these citations given by Lightfoot, *S. Clement of Rome,* i. 148–200.

[4] For the origin and probable date of these apocrypha, consult Mgr. Batiffol: "*Anciennes littératures chrétiennes: la littérature grecque,*" pp. 47. 64, 329.

the very existence of these manifold fantasies, witnesses to the noteworthy position he held in popular esteem in the earliest days, as well as the deep impression made by him on those to follow.

The sole document emanating from his pen is, consequently, of capital importance to the historian; it proves, — and this cannot be emphasized too strongly, — that in the Apostolic Age, probably even before Saint John had written the last page of our inspired Books, the Rome of Peter and Paul was fully conscious of its doctrinal primacy, and that this high privilege was recognized by the other divisions of Christendom. Corinth, haughty and disorderly though it was, not only received the Papal admonitions with respect, but extended the same welcome to the bearers of the letter, who came armed with plenary powers to enforce its behests. These legates, chosen from among the foremost members of the Mother Church, were three in number: Claudius Ephebus, Valerius Bito, and Fortunatus;[1] they delivered into the hands of their Achaian brethren a document conceived as follows:

"The Church that dwelleth in Rome to the Church that dwelleth in Corinth, to the Elect sanctified by the will of God in our Lord Jesus Christ. May the grace and peace of Almighty God abound among you through Jesus Christ!

"By reason of the woes and calamities, which suddenly, one after another, have overwhelmed Us,[2] We perceive, brethren, that We have been tardy in busying Ourselves about the questions now troubling you; and especially, dearly beloved, concerning the ungodly and hateful sedition, so surprising, so unbefitting, the chosen ones of God, which a handful of violent and stiffnecked men have enkindled and have puffed up to such a pitch of madness that your fair fame, so revered, so celebrated, so highly prized by all, is thereby deeply hurt. Is there a man that has

[1] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.*, lxv.

[2] Τὰς αἰφνιδίους καὶ ἐπαλλήλους γενομένας συμφορὰς. These two epithets clearly indicate that the reference is to the persecution under Domitian which was characterized by sudden outbursts of fury, as perfidious as they were unforeseen, such indeed as were to be expected from the Tyrant

tarried among you, who does not value your great virtues, your unshaken Faith? Who does not admire your wise and chastened godliness in the Christ? Who does not publish forth the magnificence of your hospitality? Who does not praise you for your knowledge, so unerring and so deep? In all things you did act without distinction of persons, and you walked according to the Commandments of God, subject to your leaders, and rendering to your Elders [1] the honor which is their due. In your young men you inspired the modesty which beseems them; to your women you gave charge to keep themselves blameless in the fulfilment of their duties, to do naught save in all decency and purity of conscience, loving their husbands even as it behooves them to do; you taught them to abide within the rules of submission, and honorably to oversee the business of their households with perfect prudence.

"You ever remained, all of you, lowly minded, not arrogant, but more prone to yield place to others than to demand their obedience; far happier in giving than in receiving, and content with the supplies [2] God [3] hath vouchsafed unto you. You have hearkened unto His words and graven them carefully in your hearts, and His sufferings were evermore before your eyes. Thus a deep and fruitful peace, and unquenchable yearning for the good was within you, while over you the Holy Ghost was outpoured plentifully.

whose cruelty Suetonius has portrayed in these words: "non solum magnæ, sed et callidæ inopinatæque servitiæ" (*Domit.*, ii.).

[1] *Τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν . . . τοῖς παρ' ὑμῖν πρεσβυτέροις.* It is difficult to give these two terms any precise signification which would distinguish one from the other. As the first *ἡγουμένοις* is in the plural it does not indicate that at that date there was a Bishop of Corinth in the proper meaning of that word, one sole Head of the Church; probably the allusion is merely to a small group of priests chosen from the pastoral body (*τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις*) to direct and govern in common the Corinthian fraternity.

[2] *Τοῖς ἐφοδίοις.* The stores, the provisions strictly necessary for life's journeyings: "our daily bread," as we say in the Lord's Prayer (Matt. vi. 11). The same reminiscence of the Gospel teaching inspired the counsel given Timothy by S. Paul: "Having food and wherewith to be covered, let us be content" (1 Tim. vi. 8).

[3] I have adopted the reading *τοῦ θεοῦ* of the *Codex Alexandrinus* in preference to the variant *τοῦ Χριστοῦ* given by the Manuscript of Constantinople and the Syriac Version; it is a priceless bit of testimony to his belief in the Divinity of the Christ; thereby S. Clement ascribes to the Godhead incarnate in the Christ both the teachings of the Gospel and the sufferings of the Passion.

Overflowing with holy longings, fervent zeal, and pious trustfulness, you stretched forth your hands to Almighty God, beseeching Him to be favorable to youwards, if so be, by any oversight, you had committed any sin. Day and night you did battle for the entire brotherhood, that so the whole number of the chosen might be saved by their deeds of mercy and their uprightness of conscience. You were sincere, simple, ready to forgive; to you anything like rebellion or discord seemed abominable. You wept over the sins of your neighbor; you deemed his missteps your own. So far from regretting any fine deed done, you were always ready for every good work. Your virtuous and honorable qualities made your conduct of life an ornament; among you all things were done in the fear of God; the commandments and instructions of the Lord were written on the tablets of your hearts.[1]

"In the fulness of the glory and the abundance which were vouchsafed unto you is accomplished that which is written: 'The dearly-beloved hath eaten and drank; being let loose, and waxen fat, he hath kicked.'[2] Hence, of a truth, have arisen jealousies, hatred, quarrellings, sedition, persecution and tumult, war and captivity. Thus the very vilest have arisen up against the most distinguished, folk of ill fame against the most honorable, fools against wise men, the young against their elders. Thus justice and peace are swept away, because in so far as all forsake the fear of God, just so far is their Faith in Him obscured; no longer do they walk in the way of His Commandments, neither do they lead a life worthy of the Christ, rather yielding to the base instincts of their hearts, they deliver themselves over to unjust and ungodly jealousy, whereby Death hath entered into the world.[3]

"Was it not this hateful jealousy that impelled Cain to kill his brother, that exiled Jacob, persecuted Joseph, drove Moses out of Egypt, Aaron and Mary from the camp of the Hebrews, swallowed up alive Dathen and Abiron, and incensed Saul against David?[4]

[1] Prov. vii. 3. 2 Cor. iii. 3.

[2] Here S. Clement draws his inspiration from Deuteronomy xxxii. 14, in the Septuagint Version, but he does not confine himself to a literal quotation.

[3] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.*, i.–iii.

[4] Ibid., iv.

"But let us pass over the lessons of the past," Clement continues, "let us come down to the athletes that have dwelt so nigh unto us; let us take the noble examplars of our own generation. 'T was all owing to jealousy and envy that these very great and righteous men, who were the pillars of the Church,[1] suffered persecution and fought on unto the death. Set before your eyes the holy Apostles, Peter especially, who, because of unjust envy, suffered severe pains, and who, having achieved his martyrdom, hath gone forth unto the place of glory which was his due. Because of jealousy and discords, Paul hath shewn how the prize[2] of patience is won: seven times loaded with chains, banished, stoned,[3] a herald[4] of the Christ in the East and in the West: thereby he hath gained the lofty renown of his faith. After that he had taught righteousness to the whole world, and extended his ministry unto the very confines of the East,[5] he achieved his martyrdom in the presence of the princes of the land;[6] whereupon, going forth from this world, he hath gone unto the Holy Place, leaving us a great example of patience. Unto these men of holy lives, there has been added a multitude of the Elect who, victims of the same jealousy, have endured a great store of opprobrium and torments, and have likewise left us beautiful examples. Thus, too, when persecuted by this same jealousy, women, after having, in the characters of Danaides and Dirces, suffered fearful and abominable indignities, reached the goal of the race of their faith, and carried off the prize, weak in body though they were. . . .[7]

"All these things, dearly beloved brethren, we write you,

[1] In S. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians (ii. 9), S. Clement found this figure employed to designate the Great Apostles: "James and Cephas and John, who were looked upon as pillars" of the Church.

[2] Βραβεῖον. It is the very word employed by Saint Paul, Philip. iii. 14.

[3] 2 Cor. xi. 23–27. Acts ix. 30; xiii. 50; xiv. 6, 19; xvii. 10, 14.

[4] S. Paul entitles himself thus in his second letter to Timothy i. 11. Ἐγὼ κῆρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος . . . διδάσκαλος ἐθνῶν.

[5] In the Epistle to the Romans (xv. 24), S. Paul had mentioned his longing to evangelize Spain: it is to that country S. Clement alludes here, for the ancients regarded it as the furthermost boundary of the Western world. Strabo, ii. 1; iii. 1 and 5. Velleius Paterculus, i. 2. "In ultimo Hispaniæ tractu, in extremo nostri orbis termino."

[6] In *Saint Paul and His Missions*, chap. xii., I have explained in what sense we are to understand this term: ἐπὶ τῶν ἡγουμένων.

[7] See *The Last Years of Saint Paul*, chap. vi., THE MASSACRE OF THE CHRISTIANS.

not only to remind you of your duties, but also to refresh Our memories of them, for We are in the same arena as you and the same combats await Us. Away, then, with all vain and useless cares, and let us return to the glorious and venerable rules of life which have been handed down to us. . . . Let us fix our gaze on the Blood of the Christ, and realize its cost in God's sight; how, shed for our Salvation, it has purchased the grace of repentance for the whole world."[1]

The effect of this repentance will be to bring back into men's hearts, gentleness and mercy, consequently restoring in the Church of Corinth that Peace, which God implants and wills should fructify in all His works. Throughout them all there does indeed reign an admirable order, in the heavens, on earth and over the seas; nights and days follow each other regularly; the seasons come at their appointed time; all creatures fulfil their missions in peace.[2]

Clement delighted in basing his arguments on the harmony displayed by natural phenomena. He has recourse to it again when demonstrating that the Resurrection of the dead, — one of the articles of Faith over which, ever since Saint Paul's day,[3] Corinth had never wearied of debating, — is in no wise shocking to right reason, is, in fact, nothing more than what we see daily going on under our eyes. Does not the dawn arise each day from out the shades of night; the plants and trees from seeds sown in earth; does not the phœnix, that marvellous bird of Araby, renew itself from its ashes?[4] God has, therefore, declared

[1] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.*, v.–vii. [2] Ibid., viii.–xxii. [3] 1 Cor. xv.

[4] The fable of the Phœnix enjoyed a wide popularity in olden times. Hesiod (Fragm. 50, Gæsf. ed.) and Herodotus (ii. 73) are the first writers to mention it, but, after them, both Greeks and Latins were fond of referring to it (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, x. 2. Tacitus, *Annal.*, vi. 28. Seneca, *Ep. Mor.*, 42. Lucian, *Hermot.*, 53, etc.). See the numerous allusions to this fabulous bird, collected by Henrichsen, in *De Phœnicis Fabula*. From Pagan authors this legendary tale has been adopted by the Jews, and we find them crediting it before the Christian era. See the passage from an Alexandrian poem, of the second century before Christ, quoted by Eusebius, *Præp. Evang.*, ix. 29. Buxtorf, *Lexic. Rab.*, s. h. v. Henrichsen, *loc. cit.*, ii. p. 19.

nothing not in conformity with the economy of His world, as it issued from His hands, when He proclaims in the Scriptures that our bodies shall rise again. Thereunto He has pledged His word; that word the Almighty can and will keep.[1]

Another of Saint Paul's teachings, Justification through Faith, continued to be quite as much a matter for controversy at Corinth, as the Resurrection. Had not Saint James spoken of this Dogma in terms very different from those used by the Great Apostle? To exactly determine its purport, Pope Clement, and the Roman Pontiffs after him, had but to compare the Apostolic traditions and by explaining one by the other prove that together they formed one consenting voice.[2]

"Called by the will of God in Christ Jesus, 't is not by ourselves that we are justified, neither by our wisdom, nor by our intelligence, nor by our godliness, nor by the works which we do in the holiness of our hearts, but by our faith, that faith whereby God hath justified all men. What then shall we do, my brethren? Shall we abandon all good works and charity? God forbid! Let us hasten on every good work in all fervor and diligence.[3]

"By walking in these ways we shall find Salvation, a Salvation which is none other than Jesus Christ, the High Priest of our sacrifices, our Protector and our Help in all our weaknesses. Through Him, our gaze pierces the depths of the heavens; through Him, the eyes of our hearts are opened, and our strayed and clouded intellect springs up[4] again in new light; through Him, the Lord has willed that we should taste immortal knowledge."[5]

Hitherto the writer has only touched on the causes of the disorders at Corinth in a general way; now he puts his finger on the very seat of the malady, by reminding

[1] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.*, xxiii. xxviii.
[2] Ibid., xxxi.
[3] Ibid., xxxii. xxxiii.
[4] Ἀναθάλλει. By this figurative expression the soul is compared to a plant withering in the shade which revives and sends forth fresh shoots as soon as it is set out in the light of day.
[5] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.*, xxxvi.

them of what an example of admirable discipline is furnished them throughout the Empire by the Roman armies: —

"Let us consider the soldiers who serve under our sovereigns: what order reigns among them! what obedience! with what submissiveness they execute the instructions given them! All are not Prefects or Tribunes, all do not command a hundred or even fifty men, but each one in his own rank executes the orders of the Emperor and his respective leaders. The great cannot exist without the lowly, nor the lowly without the great; all combined together have their usefulness. Take, for example, our bodies. The head is naught without the feet, nor the feet without the head; the least of its members are necessary or useful to the whole body; all tend to unite together in just subordination for the welfare of the whole.[1] Let us likewise keep our mystical body united in Christ Jesus, and let each remain subject to his neighbor in the order wherein Grace hath placed him. Let the strong protect the weak, let the weak respect the strong; let the rich be bountiful unto the poor, and let the poor praise God for having provided them with helpers in their necessities."[2]

Thus order shall be maintained, a thing so important in the eyes of the Lord that, in order to conform Israel, His chosen people thereto, He imposed on them so many minute practices, regulating every least detail which concerned Him, His Worship, the Feasts and Sacrifices, the Priesthood, their public and private life.[3] The Apostles have simply fulfilled what was foretold and prefigured by the Levitical Code, by giving the ecclesiastical Hierarchy a firm constitution.

"Preaching through the countryside and in the cities, they chose out such as were the first fruits of their Apostolate, and, after having proved them by the Spirit, they made them Bishops[4] and Deacons of them that were to

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 12–27.
[2] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.*, xxxvii. xxxviii.
[3] Ibid., xl. xli.
[4] Ἐπισκόπους. This word must be taken as synonymous with πρεσβυτέρους, for, here as everywhere else in his letter, S. Clement would seem

believe. . . . Well were they aware, these Apostles of ours, enlightened by Jesus Christ Our Lord, that some would dispute their titles. Wherefore, in their perfect foreknowledge, they designated those of whom We have just spoken, and furthermore laid down this rule, that after their death other men thus approved should take over their ministry. Consequently, that those who were clothed with this dignity by the Apostles and that other eminent men raised thereto by the consent of the whole Church, that those who have blamelessly served the flock of the Christ in all humility, peaceably, generously, men to whose goodness all have borne witness for many long years, that these should be deprived of their charge We believe to be unjust, for We cannot, without sinning gravely, disown men who have worthily and piously offered the Holy Oblations. Happy the lot of those Elders who before Us, having finished their career, became partakers in a holy and meritorious death; these needed not to fear lest they be dismissed from the post which had been assigned them.[1]

"Have we not one, only and the same God, one and the same Christ, one and the same Spirit of Grace outpoured upon us, the same vocation in the Christ? Why, then, tear and hack in pieces the members of the Christ, why make war against our own Body, and forget that we are its members? . . .

" . . . Your Schism has perverted many of the brethren, discouraged some, unsettled many others; it has filled Us with sorrow, and distressed Us, but nevertheless the embranglement widens among you.[2]

"Look again at the Epistle of blessed Paul.[3] What did he write you during the first days of the Evangelical ministry? Assuredly God inspired the letter which he wrote you on this very subject, concerning Apollo and Cephas; for even then there were factions and cabals, — cabals more excusable at that time, since your preferences were divided between Apostles endowed with the highest authority, and a man who had been approved by them. But now, what men are these that have perverted you, and have tarnished

to have in mind simply a body of pastors governing the Christian communities: i. xxi. xliv. xlvii. liv. lvii.

[1] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.* xlii. xliv.

[2] Ibid., xlvi.

[3] 1 Cor. i. 10–17; iii. 1–8; iv. 14–21.

the fair fame of your fraternal love, that love for which you were so renowned? For what We now hear said of you, my brethren, is a shame and unworthy of a Christian, that the Church of Corinth, so steadfast, so ancient, should be up in arms against its own Pastors because of one or two individuals. And this report has reached not only Us, but those as well who are far from being favorably disposed toward you, in such wise that by your follies you have caused God's Name to be blasphemed, and put yourselves in peril.[1]

"Let us, therefore, root out this disorder, and throw ourselves at the feet of the Lord, beseeching Him with tears to grant us His favor and thus be reconciled with Him. May He vouchsafe unto us anew that noble and stainless life which nourished brotherly love among us. . . . Who shall tell what ties that love formed between God and us? Who shall describe the splendor of its beauties? Words cannot express to what heights it lifted us. Love unites us to God; love covereth a multitude of sins; love beareth all things, endureth all things, patiently; there is naught that is mean in love, yet naught that is haughty; love doth not foster schisms; love never causeth seditions; love worketh only in perfect concord; by love God's chosen ones become perfect; without love no one is pleasing unto God.[2] Love alone has made us acceptable unto God, for it was by reason of His love for us that Our Lord Jesus Christ, conforming Himself to the Divine Will, did shed His Blood for us, His flesh for our flesh, His life for ours."[3]

In this eulogy of love Saint Clement's sole purpose is to enkindle their hearts and dispose them to nobler sacrifices; his end is to cut to the roots of the malady, by persuading the fomenters of unrest to expatriate themselves: —

"Lives there among you a man of a generous, compassionate and charitable soul? If so, let him say, 'If I am the cause of the seditions, the discord, the schisms which are troubling us, I will withdraw, I will go away whithersoever you please. Whatsoever the common voice of the

[1] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.*, xlvii.

[2] Here the holy Pope is evidently thinking of the praises S. Paul lavished on Divine Charity, 1 Cor. xiii.

[3] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.*, xlviii. xlix.

brethren deems best, that will I do: my only longing is that the flock of the Christ may live in peace with its lawfully appointed pastors.' He that shall conduct himself after this fashion shall acquire great glory in the Christ, and shall meet with a glad welcome everywhere. For 'the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.'[1] Behold what hath been done and ought to be done by such as are animated by this divine life, which never leaveth room for repenting it."[2]

In this, moreover, they will but imitate a goodly throng of worthies who have not hesitated before any act of self-sacrifice for the good of their fellow countrymen: Moses begging the Lord to blot him from the Book of Life, if, at that price, He will spare Israel;[3] the Pagan kings, who, in like manner, have immolated themselves for the public weal; even women, like Judith and Esther, imperilling their lives to save their people. Nor should they regard such an act of self-sacrifice as humiliating, for in this humble renunciation "they yield not to Us but to God."[4]

"We have warned the guilty and thereby lightened Our conscience; what more can We do except beseech the Lord to keep His chosen flock under His care?"[5] And Clement closes his letter with a touching prayer, wherein all men are partakers, even the rulers and chiefs of the Empire who had but now been persecuting the Church. Even when fresh from the scene of Nero's blood-stained orgies, Peter and Paul had bidden all true believers to respect the power committed to the hands of that monster.[6] Following their example, Clement prays for Domitian and the Prefects of the Empire, the agents of his cruel acts. Had not this Divine Master commanded them to honor established powers in the lawful domain of their authority, to "render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's"?[7] To that command we find the Roman Pontiffs ever faith-

[1] Ps. xxiv. 1.
[2] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.*, liv.
[3] Exodus xxxii. 30-32.
[4] S. Clement, *Ad Cor.*, liii. lv.
[5] Ibid., lvii.
[6] 1 Peter ii. 13, 15; Rom. xiii. 1–7; Titus iii. 1.
[7] Matt. xxii. 21.

ful, ever inculcating this respectful spirit throughout Christendom. But, over above kings and princes, in the esteem as in the affection of the Church, are the poor and afflicted. So it is in their behalf that Saint Clement begins his prayer: —

"Lord, we beseech Thee, be our aid and helper! Deliver those of us that are in tribulation, have pity on the lowly, lift up them that have fallen, succor the poor, heal the sick, convert such of the people as have strayed, comfort the weak spirited; let all the Nations know that Thou alone art God, and Jesus Christ Thy Son, and we Thy people and the sheep of Thy Fold. . . ."

Thereupon he passes on to those in authority, and well do we know what they were in his day: —

"Grant unto us concord and peace, to us and to all the inhabitants of the earth, as Thou didst bestow it upon our fathers who invoked Thy Name in godliness and truth; grant us this because we obey Thee, Whose Name is omnipotence and majesty; and we likewise obey them that are our rulers and masters upon earth. Thou art He, Lord, Who, by Thy great and unutterable power, hath given them the power to reign, that, even so, recognizing the glory and honor wherewith Thou hast invested them, we should be subject unto them, thereby avoiding all opposition to Thy will. Grant them, Lord, health, peace, concord, firmness, that they may wield unhampered that sovereignty which Thou hast bestowed upon them. For Thou, Lord, the Heavenly King of the ages, dost give unto the sons of men, glory, honor, and authority over all that is on earth. Guide, Lord, their wills according to what is goodly and acceptable in Thy sight, that by using, in peace and gentleness, the power which Thou hast confided unto them they may find in Thee their Helper. O Thou Who alone canst pour out upon us these graces, and others far excelling them, unto Thee do we offer up our praises through Jesus Christ, the Pontiff and Guardian of our souls, in Whom be glory and majesty unto Thee both now and from generation to generation, forever and forevermore. Amen."

I have gone to considerable length in the quotations from this Epistle; indeed I would gladly have extended them and given my readers the entire work, so eminently adapted does it seem to me to introduce us not only to the Pontiff who wrote it, but to the Church of Rome in the closing years of the Apostolic Age. We have seen how, thereafter, the authority of that Metropolis had manifested itself over the other Churches; in like manner it enables us to glimpse many features of their private life, the forms after which their prayers were fashioned, their customary themes for meditation, consequently their modes of thought.

The numerous extracts Clement makes from our Holy Books give us invaluable information on these points, for both laymen and clergy made use of the same sources. The Psalter contributes a goodly share; he has recourse to it no less than forty times, and often the holy hymn is repeated in its entirety; among the Prophets, Isaias is the oftenest cited, after him Ezechiel and Jeremy. As for the New Testament, frequent similarities in thought and expression testify to the confidence reposed in them by the writer, but actually quotations are rare; they are confined to a few sayings borrowed either from the three first Evangelists or from Saint Paul.[1] It was under the watchful eyes of Saint Peter's successors that the Canon of Apostolic writings gradually took shape, without, however, at that period predominating over the Sacred Books of Israel.

The Liturgy of the Synagogues still maintained a like ascendency; some curious comparisons have been made between the most commonly used prayer of the Jews, "The Eighteen Benedictions" (Shemonë Esrë)[2] and the text of Saint Clement; actually the similarities are entirely external and very easily explained. As then each pastor improvised the public prayer, he would naturally make it appropriate to the occasion. And as like needs

[1] Again I would refer the reader, for a list of these borrowed passages, to the works of Lightfoot and Funk given above.

[2] For details concerning this Prayer, consult *Saint Paul and his Missions*, chap. viii. and Schürer, *Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes*, ii. 377 *et seq.*; 384.

would justify like appeals, the duties of worship and thanksgiving being still less subject to varying circumstances, it would of course happen that when the same thoughts recurred in the mind of the officiating clergyman, the same words would rise to his lips. Thus by degrees, prayer, especially in divine service, took on certain fixed forms, which they agreed in repeating and which soon became consecrated by hallowed usage. The respect shown these formulas depended in great measure on the degree of authority enjoyed by the pastors or churches from which they emanated. And as Rome, in this respect, overshadowed all Christendom, its model was followed by the rest of the world: this is the most probable explanation of the conformity offered by the prayers in the oldest liturgies with the final invocation in Saint Clement's work.[1] If this conjecture is well founded, Rome must have already begun to exercise its providential mission in the domain of Christian worship, as an exemplar to the other churches, and determining its forms. Nowhere more than in this city were there minds better disposed to estimate rightly the importance of a Liturgy, for it is well known with what scrupulosity Roman Paganism had, at all times, guarded its least rites; a watchful rigorism was its distinguishing trait.

However great or small the influence exercised in this respect by the formalism of the old Romans, other instincts of their race flowed manifestly in the veins of Christian Rome: namely, the genius of authority, the spirit of order and discipline, necessary to the Metropolis of a new world. Experience, grafted on this sturdy stock, has borne its fitting fruit in a rectitude of judgment and practical sense which render it worthy to govern the Christian world. Clement has one very significant word to express this combination of qualities, a word which constantly recurs to his pen, — "moderation."[2] What he understands thereby and what he longs to inspire in the

[1] Cf. the interesting and learned study in Lightfoot's *S. Clement of Rome*, i. pp. 382–400.

[2] Ἐπιεικεία, xiii. xxx. lvi. lviii. lxii.

Corinthians is a constant carefulness not to go to excesses, to seek in everything a perfect equilibrium, the rightful measure, the means adapted to conciliate men's minds.

This spirit of compromise, which to him seemed the only way of restoring peace in Corinth, was ever Saint Clement's foremost thought. His letter had the desired as well as a durable effect. Fifty years later Hegesippus tarried some time as a visitor to this Christian community; he had the great consolation of finding himself in perfect communion with it; of the dissensions which had unsettled it in the days of Domitian, not a trace was left. After Clement's letter, Corinth continued steadfast and peaceable in the sound doctrine.[1]

Antiquity, struck by this first evocation of the Papal Authority, has conferred many glorious titles on Saint Clement. It saluted his memory as the Martyr of the Christ,[2] the Apostle, the Apostolic Man,[3] the Bishop who, from the outset, was wise enough to provide precious organs for the use of his Church. Some have even gone so

[1] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iv. xxii.

[2] For the Acts of the Martyrdom of S. Clement, see Paul Allard, *Histoire des Persécutions pendant les deux premiers siècles*, 2d ed. pp. 173–180. All that can be said in support of the tradition which calls S. Clement a martyr, is summed up in the note appended by the Abbé Duchesne to this line in the *Liber Pontificalis:* "Obiit martyr Trajano III." "This unwonted formula as well as the date is taken from the account of S. Clement given by S. Jerome in his *De Viris:* 'Obiit tertio Trajani anno.' The intercalation of the word *Martyr* is very noteworthy. Clement is styled Martyr by Rufinus (S. Jerome, *Apol. Adv. Libros Rufini*, edited by Martianay, vol. iv. Part II. p. 409); and by the Council of Vaison, in 442 (Can. 6). The same title is given him in the Roman Calendars, from the Hieronymian Martyrology down . . . in the Roman Sacramentaries, from the Leonine Sacramentary down, and in the other liturgical books. At Rome in the Basilica, which from S. Jerome's time (*De Viris*, 15) has preserved the memory of Clement, there have been found fragments of a grand dedicatory inscription, wherein the word MARTYR is prominent. The restoration proposed by Signor de Rossi (*Boll.*, 1870, p. 148) is almost certainly the correct one, and, if he is right, this qualifying term was joined to the name Clement. The inscription dates from the time of Pope Siricius (384–399). It is therefore positive, whatever we may think of the silence on this subject of such ancient writers as Irenæus, Eusebius, Jerome, that the tradition of S. Clement's Martyrdom was firmly established in Rome from the end of the fourth century down." *Liber Pontificalis*, i. 123, note 9.

[3] Ὁ ἀπόστολος Κλήμης. Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.*, iv. xvii. "*Vir Apostolicus*," S. Jerome, *In Is.*, lii. 13.

far as to attribute to him the division of Christian Rome into seven quarters, and the creation of notaries charged with engrossing the Acts of the Martyrs.[1] Criticism does not permit of our accepting without reservation all these hypotheses, which, be it said, cannot add anything to the lustre of his fame as having, by his sole mediation, put an end to the troubles of Corinth. By that intervention he consecrated forevermore the right inherent in Rome and her Pontiffs to utter their authoritative decrees in any and every debate which threatens to divide Christendom; he testifies that to them belongs the duty of speaking in the name of Peter and Paul to the entire Church, to uphold therein the vigor of its rules and the unity of the Faith.

[1] In all likelihood the division of Rome into seven ecclesiastical regions does not antedate the pontificate of Fabian (236–250). See the note on this Pope by Mgr. Duchesne in the *Liber Pontificalis*, and, in the same work, on the Notaries and the *Gesta Martyrum*, in the Introduction to vol. i. pp. c and ci.

CHAPTER IX.

SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST.

About the same time that Corinth welcomed the words of peace we have just heard, the Christian congregations of Asia, still more highly favored, were enriched by a bequest of the reminiscences of John's ripe old age, the most sublime of the evangelical teachings.

When "the dearly beloved of Jesus," sole survivor of the Twelve, completed his term of exile at Patmos, he returned to Ephesus. There he renewed his acquaintance with the society of believers that for the past thirty years had dwelt there. During the period of Saint Paul's preaching we, too, had a glimpse[1] of that circle of converts drawn, some from Jewry, others from the Gentile world, but all alike basing their ideas on the same philosophical groundwork: the system fostered throughout the East by the Schools of Alexandria. Ephesus was steeped in these notions, for this city of pleasure and commerce kept up a busy intercourse with Egypt. Accustomed as they were to clothe everything pertaining to the speculative domain in Alexandrian modes, the flower of the Asiatic Christians lost no time in refashioning the new doctrines; consequently, not only a majority of the brethren, but John himself, thoroughly Jewish as he was by education and native genius, insensibly became wonted to this more abstract manner of teaching. In this way the Johannine Theology had had its rise, even before Domitian's acts of persecution cast the Apostle into the Prætorian dungeons, and thereafter on the rocky shores of Patmos.

This metaphysical system, so far removed from the primitive simplicity, gave occasion to the novelty seekers

[1] *Saint Paul and His Missions*, chaps. ix. and x.

who were always in evidence at Ephesus, even in Christian congregations, to bewilder themselves and their hearers with fanciful conceits concerning the chiefest article of their Faith, — the adorable Personality of Jesus Christ. Some went so far as to distinguish the Christ from Jesus, seeing in the latter only a man like any other. To disprove and dispel these figments of the imagination by bringing them face to face with the Christ actually incarnate, true Man and true God, no testimony could outweigh that of the disciple who had pillowed his head on the Master's breast and had known Him so intimately.

According to the tale treasured up at Rome and Alexandria[1] it was owing to the solicitations of the Asiatic Bishops that John was moved to arrange his memories of those days and to indite them. Whether or not this be the true origin of the Holy Book, we know at least that it obtained an immediate and wide circulation. Elsewhere[2] we have seen how, from its first appearance, the few contemporaries whose testimony has come down to us not only venerate it but quote it as of the same rank as the other Gospels. In the latter half of the Second Century it is everywhere recognized as the work of John, the Lord's disciple. One of the foremost Fathers of that age, Saint Irenæus, puts it beyond all question that this disciple is the son of Zebedee.[3]

How comes it then that Tradition, thereafter unanimous on this point, has hardly given a thought, in all these nineteen centuries, to the objection over which the Rationalists now raise so great a to-do? that is to say, the differences between the character of the work and that of the Author.[4] Is it not most unlikely, they urge, that a Galilean fisherman, imbued with Jewish ideas,

[1] Fragment de Muratori, p. 10 A. Clement of Alexandria quoted by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, vi. xiv.).

[2] See the INTRODUCTION, page

[3] *Ἔπειτα Ἰωάννης, ὁ καὶ μαθητὴς τοῦ Κυρίου, ὁἐπὶ τὸ στήθος αὐτοῦ ἀναπεσὼν, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐξέδωκε τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον ἐν Ἐφέσῳ τῆς Ἀσίας διατρίβων.* S. Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, iii. iii. 1.

[4] Luthardt, *Der Johanneische Ursprung*, pp. 178 *et seq.*

should have clothed his thoughts and his language in Alexandrian forms? Assuredly this contrast did not escape the Fathers of the first centuries. The controversies carried on over the question of the Alogi[1] bear witness to their abilities and the Doctors who took part in it, especially Saint Hippolytus and Dionysius, testify in the fragments of their works now in our possession that for shrewdness and penetration, these critics of old need not yield the palm to those of our day. If they paid small heed to these antitheses, which our opponents exaggerate to suit themselves, it must have been because they did not regard them as irreconcilable. And if once we obtain a just notion of what the Fourth Gospel is, we shall share their sentiments.

The Author distinctly declares what object he has in view: "These things are written," he says, "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God;"[2] in other terms, that Jesus and the Christ form but the one same Person, which is God, by the same right as He is the Supreme Being, the Father that has begotten Him from all Eternity. Who were they, then, that were attacking this divine dogma at that time? This the Gospel does not tell us, but another document which is closely linked to it, John's First Epistle, gives us the answer: "Who is a liar," we read therein, "but he who denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the Antichrist who denieth the Father and the Son! Whosoever denieth the Son, doth not recognize the Father, and whosoever confesseth the Son recognizeth the Father also."[3] "Every spirit that divideth Jesus Christ[4] is not of God, and this is the Antichrist."[5] It is hardly possible

[1] Consult the INTRODUCTION, page xiv.

[2] John xx. 31.

[3] 1 John ii. 22, 23.

[4] Socrates (*Hist. Eccles.*, vii. 32) declares that in the ancient MSS. he found the reading "πᾶν πνεῦμα ὃ λύει τὸν Ἰησοῦν," which the Vulgate adopted and translated: "Omnis spiritus qui solvit Jesum." The same is true of S. Irenæus (*Adv. Hær.*, iii. xvi. 8) and Origen (*In Matt.* xxv. 14). The text as given in the Greek MSS., πᾶν πνεῦμα ὃ μὴ ὁμολογεῖ τὸν Ἰησοῦν, is much less expressive.

[5] 1 John iv. 3.

to draw any other conclusion from these earliest references than this, that "many false prophets had arisen in the world"[1] of Asiatic society in which the Apostle was living; but other passages in the same letter cast still more light on the question. "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the veritable flesh is of God."[2] And further on: "Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is He that came by water and by blood, Jesus Christ; not by water only, but water and blood. And it is the Spirit which testifieth; now the Spirit is the Truth."[3]

To rightly understand this last text, it is necessary to set over against it the errors which were then being promulgated in the name of Cerinthus, the principal disturber of the Asiatic Churches.[4] This personage, a Jew by birth but brought up in the Alexandrian Schools, had only embraced the Faith that he might interpret it after his own imaginings, and, like many of his compatriots, had set out to scour the world in search of proselytes.[5] The Churches of Palestine and of Syria, Jerusalem, Cæsaræa and Antioch, had all been more or less exposed to the infection of his corrupting doctrines; but it was in Asia Minor and especially in Galatia that the pit of perdition,[6] wherein he was endeavoring to drag down his followers, became most manifest. When he reached Ephesus, he had already fabricated his Heresy out of whole cloth. Its underlying purpose was to deny the miraculous conception of the Saviour. It is true that this, the foremost

[1] 1 John iv. 1.

[2] Ibid., 2.

[3] Ibid., v. 5, 6. The other reading, Χριστός ἐστιν ἡ ἀλήθεια, which the Vulgate translates, is to be found in only one Greek MS. of recent date.

[4] As to Cerinthus and his heresy, consult S. Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, i. xxvi. 1; iii. xi. 1, 7. S. Hippolytus, *Refutatio omn. Hær.* (*Philosophoumena*), vii. 7, 9, 33–35; x. 21, 22. Caius, quoted by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccles.*, iii. xxvii. 2, 3). Dionysius of Alexandria, in Eusebius (*Hist. Eccles.*, iii. xxviii. 4, 5; vii. xxv. 2–5). Tertullian, *Præs.*, 48. S. Epiphanius, *Hær.*, xxviii. *Epit. Pænar.*, i. Theodoret, *Hæret. fab.*, ii. 3. Philaster, 36, 60.

[5] Matt. xxiii. 15.

[6] Τῆς αὐτοῦ ἀπωλείας βάραθρον. S. Epiphanius, *Hær.*, xxviii. 2.

fact in Christianity, is related in Saint Matthew's Gospel, which was the only one he accepted, but he did not hesitate to tear out this first page, and to begin the Divine Life of the Saviour with His Baptism. Till then, he taught, the son, born of the natural union of Mary and Joseph, was but a man, the holiest, the wisest that can be conceived of, but yet a mere man. But at the moment Saint John Baptist poured over him the water of Jordan, a sudden transformation took place in Jesus. The divine Christ, "Æon," separating itself from the Supreme Being, descended upon Him in the form of a dove, and remained with Him throughout the course of His ministry; but this alliance only lasted up to His Passion. The Christ then went up again into the bosom of God, leaving Jesus alone to suffer and die and rise again. Such, according to the testimony of Saint Irenæus, was the teaching of Cerinthus.

This coinage of his fancy, as gratuitous as it is singular, made the Saviour's Divinity a fleeting union which the Christ had contracted with Jesus in Jordan's waters, but without hypostatically uniting the flesh of the latter to His Divine Person, without making of his blood His own blood. It absolutely did away with the reality of the Incarnation. These are the impious vagaries of Cerinthus which Saint John has in view in writing his Epistle, urged thereto by his disciples, who asked that he avenge the adored memory of the Christ.[1]

This he did, not by disputing every step of the ground with his adversaries, but by endeavoring to raise their thoughts to serener heights, where, fully imbued with memories of the Saviour, he was wont to contemplate Him in the possession of His glory. Are we not well aware that the impressions of youth revive again in old age? In Saint John they had kept a freshness of features and coloring, a preciseness of detail that rendered the Master's

[1] Evidently it was this error of Cerinthus which prompted the passage in S. John's Epistle referred to above: "Jesus came by water and by blood, not by water only (of His Baptism), but by water and the blood (of His Humanity)." 1 John v. 6.

words as distinctly, His Personality and His deeds as actually present before him, as during those days when he followed after Him step by step. Beyond the fact that it behooved him to see that none of this priceless treasure be lost, John deemed that the best argument to bring against the innovators was to confront them with just what "his eyes had seen," what "his ears had heard," what "his hands had touched," in testimony of the Divinity of the Christ.

But from those heights whither the illustrious patriarch had risen and where he reposed, his gaze swept the long flights of time wherein the Church was to endure. The errors of Cerinthus only served him with an occasion for writing; it was neither the sole, nor the principal, cause of his undertaking it. He saw that this was but the beginning of that strife which was to last as long as the world lasts: the never-ceasing rebellion of hearts inclined to evil, which, far from seeking salvation in the Christ, would ever be bitterly bent on vilifying His divine Personality, debasing Him to the level of a mere mortal, quite as incapable of saving as He was powerless to punish them. It was to these hosts of rebels, to the Antichrists of all ages, that John dedicates the words of his Gospel: words resplendent with light and life and love.

This doctrine had to be understood by those that received it from the outset. Accordingly the Apostle was very careful to accommodate his thoughts, not only to the peculiar cast of mind and to the familiar speech of his hearers, but furthermore to their degree of knowledge. It is easy to divine, just from the prominent features of this work, what men he had in view: evidently he is speaking to Greeks but slightly acquainted with Israelitish lore. Consequently he never fails either to translate the Hebrew names,[1] or to explain Jewish institutions, or to add certain information concerning localities which would have been superfluous had he been addressing Jews born in Palestine or such as had visited it on pilgrimage.[2]

[1] John i. 38, 41, 42; v. 2; ix. 7; xi. 16; xix. 17; xxi. 2.
[2] Ibid., ii. 6, 13; iv. 5–9; v. 2–4; vii. 37; xi. 18; xix. 14, 17, 20, 31,

The stress laid on events which in the Life of the Saviour brought Him in touch with the Gentiles, would also go to show that he is thinking of believers who, for the most part, have been gathered from Pagan society. So then, he speaks to them of the Jews as of a foreign race, and with far less consideration for Israel than is displayed by the Synoptics. He is writing after the destruction of the Holy City, nor does he, as Paul did, discuss the obligatory force of the ancient Law, since already the divorce between Synagogue and Church had been consummated. In the lustre of the preaching of the Son, that splendor divine, whereof it was but the dawning light, the revelation of Moses pales away and is effaced forevermore.

Not that John misprizes either the authority God had given to the Law, or the notable factor it had been in the economy of our salvation. He relates the saying of Jesus to the Samaritan woman, "Salvation cometh from the Jews,"[1] and that other to the mob which wanted to stone Him: "Search the Scriptures, wherein you deem you have eternal life! and the same are they that give testimony of Me."[2] Not content with recalling the Saviour's praises of the Law, he depicts Him as being exact in its practices,[3] observing its Feasts; declaring that the Temple is His Father's House; by driving from it the traffickers and money changers, whip in hand.[4] John could not have adduced a higher authority than this lofty example to affirm the power of the Mosaic legislation; hence he is all the more justified in upbraiding the Jews in whose behoof God destined the Gospel to be the perfect accomplishment of the Law, though they have disowned it. Only a chosen few from among them ever acknowledged the Christ: the overwhelming majority of the people, led

42. For ampler details see Camerlinck, *De Quarti Evangelii Auctore Dissertatio*, pp. 276–281, and Bacuez and Vigouroux, *Manuel Biblique*, vol. iii. No 68, 5°.

[1] John iv. 22.

[2] Ibid., v. 39, 45, 47.

[3] Both Circumcision and the Sabbath are treated by Him with respect, Ibid., vii. 21–23.

[4] Ibid., ii. 14, 16.

on by its Pontiffs, fought against Him, put Him to death. And thus, while the earlier Evangelists lay the blame for having withstood the Saviour in great measure to the Pharisees, John accuses the whole Nation of having been His enemies, — those Jews, thenceforth damned, whom he now beholds siding with Cerinthus, among the foemen of the Faith.

It is obvious, from these several features, that the fourth Evangelist, from living so long away from those converted Jews who had filled the first ranks of the Church, was heart and soul in sympathy with the Asiatic Christians; we note, too, taking his work by and large, that though he does not suppose any familiarity on their part with Jewish localities and customs, he does presume on their being well instructed in regard to the Saviour's life, as the Twelve had been wont to recount it to their congregations, and as, consequently, the Synoptical Gospels had published it far and wide. We have an example of this in the facts concerning the Forerunner; at the very outset Saint John advances this bit of evidence which he deems important as establishing the Saviour's Divinity: "I saw the Spirit coming down as a Dove, and resting upon Jesus."[1] Here the allusion is, of course, to the Baptism in the Jordan, and notwithstanding that he was an eye-witness to it, he does not relate that scene, because he considers it sufficiently known to all. Then again, although he nowhere tells the tale of John the Baptist's arrest and trial, he does in the course of another narrative let fall this remark, "John had not as yet been cast into prison."[2]

Thus, then, this is no new history of the Saviour which Saint John is composing; nor has he even in mind, as some of the Fathers have presumed,[3] a work which should supplement that of his predecessors. We do undoubtedly owe to him many facts which are not to be found in the Synoptics,[4] facts assuredly of deep interest, such as Jesus'

[1] John i. 32. [2] Ibid., iii. 24.
[3] S. Jerome, *De Viris illustr.*, 9. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. xxiv.
[4] The same may be said of many minor details which lingered in his

conversations with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman; the Miracle of the wedding at Cana; the healing of the paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda; that of the man born blind; and the resurrection of Lazarus; but these incidents were chosen by him solely because they were the most fitting for his purpose. "Were it necessary to relate all," he tells us, "I do not believe that the world would be able to contain the books I should have to write."[1] This touch of Oriental hyperbole shows that the Apostle had no intention of penning an historical work: on the contrary he confirms his declaration "that he is writing solely to quicken the belief in the Divinity of Jesus Christ.[2]"

But it seldom happens that a man rids himself of inherited tendencies altogether. Even when moved by the Spirit which is assisting him, even while so far absorbed in the Gentiles' cause as to condescend with fatherly solicitude to their ignorance of Jewish history, John still bears the impress of his race, which asserts itself in his manner of writing. An Apologist of Greek birth or education would have had recourse to didactic reasonings to prove his thesis: nothing could be more opposed to the genius of Israel. The latter's process is always first to seize the imagination by means of some picture or allegory, thereafter enforcing its moral appeal to the intellect. Accommodating His teachings to this turn of the Jewish mind, the Master hardly ever did more than set before them certain parables, enforcing them by miracles. In like manner the Apostles based their instructions on incidents in the Saviour's life, which in the sequel went to form "the Gospel" as we now read it in the Synoptics. If I may without disrespect make use of a modern term to characterize this method of instruction, I might term it, to a certain degree, "object lessons;" or, better, it is making the facts, whether real or symbolical, speak for them-

memory and are peculiar to him: Malchus, the man's name that was wounded by Peter (xviii. 10); the name of Judas' father (xiii. 2); likewise certain names of places: Cana, Ænon, Salim, Sichar, Bethany near Jordan.

[1] John xxi. 25. [2] Ibid., xx. 31.

selves, preach their own sermon. Accustomed from childhood to this system, John naturally recurred to it when setting forth his doctrine.

Hence it happens that what we call "his Gospel" has an historical coloring because, outside of the Prologue, what we find therein are mostly facts which furnish matter for the discourses; but these facts are selected with the sole purpose of proving the point at issue. Almost all of them are Miracles, "Signs,"[1] indicative of those Divine Attributes which the Apostle is seeking to display in Jesus: thus he shows Him as the fountain-head of Life in the raising of Lazarus; of Light, in the healing of the man born blind; as Creator and Master of the material world, in the wedding at Cana and the multiplying of the fishes. For the same reasons he chooses the personages who fill his stage: they but furnish further examples of the wretched welcome which ignorance and human passions have extended to the Gospel from its first appearance, which they will continue to do till the end of Time. The Doctors of Jerusalem, even Nicodemus himself, the most loyal of their number, display, in their conversations with the Saviour, very little open-mindedness to "Heavenly things,"[2] a failing common to the most cultivated minds when Faith has been clipped of her wings.[3] On the contrary, the Samaritan woman and she that was taken in adultery testify to the ease wherewith Grace finds its way into even blighted hearts, if only they be simple, upright, repentant.

But, once again be it said, John is not writing a connected tale. He picks out certain facts and personages merely because they permit him to point the moral of the Master's discourses, by witnessing to His Divinity; and

[1] Σημεῖα. John ii. 11, 23; iii. 2; iv. 48; vii. 2, etc.

[2] Τὰ ἐπουράνια. Ibid., iii. 12.

[3] All men are prone to debase the Master's words by understanding them in a material sense. Designedly, it would seem, S. John chose such scenes as for the most part furnish but a series of misunderstandings and misconceptions, to display the feebleness of the human mind when supernatural light floods it for the first time; it remains dazzled, blinded incapable of seeing anything until, with the awakening of Faith, it is enlightened by its pure rays.

accordingly they interest him only in so far as they contribute to this end. Nicodemus[1] appears solely to show by his interruptions how unfitted were the wisest and sincerest minds of Israel to understand the Saviour. As soon as the response of Jesus, proceeding unhindered, becomes the doctrinal exposition which the Evangelist has in mind, Nicodemus disappears and we hear no more of him. The same is true of the Gentiles who besought the Apostles to bring them before Jesus.[2] The Saviour takes this occasion to announce His approaching hour, and to engage in a sublime colloquy with His Father. As for the Gentiles, we are left in ignorance as to what became of them.

This omission of accessory circumstances, the absence of any logical order in the narrative, are characteristic of the Author's manner. He searches his memory for such matter as seems to him most fitted to support his demonstration; the few facts he adduces furnish an occasion for lofty teachings; but though small in number these suffice to assure him an incontestable authority, since the abundance and preciseness of the details given prove that he was an eye-witness.

The design of the Fourth Gospel, conceived after this fashion, may, up to a certain point, explain the peculiarities which distinguish it from the others. The principal one is the scarcity of Parables, the customary vehicle which the Saviour's preaching makes use of in the Synoptics, so much so that Matthew and Mark go so far as to say that He never spoke to the people save in this fashion.[3] In this He adapted Himself to the habits of His hearers; most of all because thereby He translated the Word Divine into the popular tongue. By allegorical scenes which gave a tangible appearance to the purest Truths; by similitudes drawn from the fields, from fishing life, from business, from the various happenings of every-day life, He descended to the level of the lowliest, captured their imaginations, and engraved upon their hearts in

[1] John iii. [2] Ibid., xii. 20 *et seq.*
[3] Matt. xiii. 10–12, 34, 35. Mark iv. 33, 34.

glowing letters His precepts of morality. We recognize a Divine hand in the choice of this mode of instruction, for, though especially native to the Oriental genius, it is no less fitting at all times to attract the common run of mortal minds, that multitude of humble folk to whom Jesus preferred to confide the truth rather than to the haughty and rich.

It is impossible, furthermore, not to note how widely the forms of the Saviour's teachings differ in Saint John and in his predecessors. In the Synoptics, the Master's language is simple, made up of short sentences and familiar comparisons. Quite otherwise is the case with the Fourth Gospel: a series of discourses, or rather, let us say, conversations, wherein mystical speculations are treated of in terms so lofty that it would seem impossible for the masses to grasp them. Nevertheless, though John has penetrated further than any man into the knowledge of these "Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven,"[1] which Jesus divulged to His Apostles, need we conclude from this that the first Evangelists were ignorant of them? Is there, after all, such a wide gulf between Saint John's contemplations and the sublime Prayer in Saint Matthew: "Yea, Father, I praise Thee because it hath pleased Thee to hide these things from the prudent and to reveal them unto the little ones. All things are given into My hands by My Father, and none knoweth the Father but the Son and he to whom He shall see fit to reveal Him."[2]

Despite these differences[3] in handling their subject,

[1] Matt. xiii. 11.

[2] Ibid., xi. 25, 27.

[3] Even the Synoptics do not report the Saviour's words identically; all they deemed essential was to give His thoughts with perfect fidelity. They did not pretend to be able always to repeat word for word the expressions He had used. For the important points, however, there is reason to believe that the words of Jesus were graven on the memory of His hearers. This is true of S. John. He recalls perfectly the Saviour's conversations, but he evidently does no more than sum them up and give their principal features. How otherwise, for instance, could we account for His interview with Nicodemus lasting no longer than the time it takes to read the third chapter of the last Gospel? See Corluy, *Commentar. in Evangelium S. Joannis, Prolegomena V., De Indole Sermonum Jesu apud S. Joannem.*

always the features and the figure of the Saviour as reflected in the last Gospel recalls Him as He appeared to us in the three others: the same character, the same spirit, the same doctrine. Even the vivid imagery of the Synoptics is in evidence: here, Jesus directing the Samaritan woman to the spring of waters which springs up unto eternal life;[1] elsewhere, displaying before His Apostle's eyes that allegorical picture of the Good Shepherd,[2] of the Vine and its Branches;[3] with many others which we cannot stop to enumerate. But I am anxious to emphasize this point, that it was of set purpose that John omits so many instructions in order to concentrate his readers' attention on the circumstances whereby Jesus bore witness to His Divinity.

In this choice he was guided by the same considerations which influenced his style, and which I have alluded to already. No reader can fail to remark, in the last Gospel, the use of certain locutions like "Word," "Light," "Grace," "Paraclete," which indicate a new spirit in the Church. These are typical expressions of the Alexandrian School, and in common use among the Greeks at Ephesus, responding as they did to their abstract conceptions. John, accustomed for the past thirty years to hear them, and most desirous of making himself understood, naturally clothes the Saviour's preaching in these forms.

The same reasons would seem to have led him to prefer the symbolic scenes.[4] It is well known how fond the Alexandrians were of casting their thoughts in this mould. It seems all the more likely that it was to adapt his words to the taste of his hearers that John gave this character to the historical portion of his work, because he himself makes no secret of it. Take the conclusion of the sub-

[1] John iv. 14.
[2] Ibid., x. 1–16.
[3] Ibid., xv. 1–6. Cf. Weiss, *Einleitung in das N. T.*, p. 580, no. 3.
[4] We should be careful not to confound a Symbol with a Parable. The latter is a complete story, historical or fancied, told with the idea of inculcating a moral lesson, — for example, the tale of the prodigal son. A Symbol is any word, figure, or fact employed as a sign of something else: thus, the healing of the officer's son at Capharnaum, which signifies the calling of the Gentiles.

lime Prologue which begins in Heaven itself the history of the Incarnate Word on earth: — this is that the Son, while becoming Man, remains what He is from all Eternity in the Bosom of the Father, the outward Expression of God.[1] Now everything about this Word made Flesh has some message for us, not only His voice, but His look, His gestures; every deed of this Divine person is fraught with meaning; over and above the rest, His Miracles, since they all contain, together with the testimony of His Omnipotence, such profound lessons. Accordingly, from among the wonders he had been witness to, John selects such as best illustrated the Saviour's meaning. At times the thought symbolized seems to him so luminous that he need add no explication. Is it not manifest, for instance, that at the wedding in Cana,[2] the water is for a figure of Judaism with its successive Ablutions, powerless to purify men's souls? Wherefore Jesus changed it into the generous wine of the New Belief. Or again, what is the healing of the officer's son of Capharnaum,[3] if it does not mean that the Gentile world owes its salvation to its Faith alone!

Thus, then, it would be folly to deny that the Fourth Gospel is Alexandrian in its form, but it remains no less evident that its Author is a Jew by birth and education. Not only is everything concerning Palestine, its topography, the religious and political conditions of the country, well known to him,[4] but he speaks Greek like a

[1] "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was in God, and the Word was God. . . . No man hath seen God: the only begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." John i. 1, 18.

[2] John ii. 1–11.

[3] Ibid., iv. 46–54.

[4] His acquaintance with the slightest details concerning the localities betrays the fact that the Author had lived in Palestine and traversed those regions. He distinguishes the Bethany which was the abode of Martha and Mary from the Bethany over beyond Jordan (xi. 1, 18; i. 28; x. 40); he is aware that from Cana to Capharnaum the road goes down hill: ἵνα καταβῇ (iv. 47); he notes that Ænon is near Salim (iii. 23), etc. The religious conditions of Judea, at the time of the Christ, are no less exactly known to him. To cite but one example: the Synoptics name as the Saviour's bitterest enemies the Sadducees and Pharisees: with more correctness S. John speaks of them as High Priests, Ἀρχιερεῖς. As a

veritable Israelite; beneath every word he utters in his adopted tongue, one detects the Hebrew term, the Hebrew thought; the balanced periods of the Hellenes are foreign to his speech; a few particles suffice to link the short members of each phrase, and often it is hard to catch the logical connection between them; to make up for it, that parallelism of ideas so dear to the Hebrews occurs frequently and under divers forms: repetition, opposition, contrast.[1]

These peculiarities lend an original character to the Greek of the Fourth Gospel, without, however, injuring its purity; for the language is more correct than in the Apocalypse.[2] Is not this an indication that in all likelihood other hands were at work with Saint John in the editing of his Recollections. Those disciples that had urged the aged man to bequeath them his document might easily render him any services such as correcting whatever might strike them as improper, either in form or expression. Indeed they do actually reveal their presence, in person, at the end of the last chapter, when confirming the testimony of the Apostle;[3] it may very well be that

matter of fact, the sacerdotal aristocracy did form this political party, Sadducean in its doctrines, which, owing to its position and influence, shared the power with the popular party of the Pharisees. For further details see A. Camerlinck, *De Quarti Evangelii Auctore Dissertatio*, pp. 220–229.

[1] Luthardt, *Das Johanneische Evangelium*, vol. i. pp. 14–62 (2d ed.). Westcott, *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, p. 260 (5th ed.) Godet, *Commentaire*, pp. 226 *et seq.* Weiss, *Einleitung in das N. T.*, p. 562. Fillion, *Évangile Selon S. Jean*, pp. liv. *et seq.* P. Calmes, *L'Évangile Selon S. Jean*, Introduction.

[2] As far back as the third century, S. Dionysius of Alexandria had remarked this fact (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, vii. xxv.). — As to the Greek type of the Fourth Gospel, see Beelen, *Grammatica Græcitatis Novi Testamenti.* Lovanii, 1857, *passim.*

[3] John xx. 30, 31; xxi. 24, 25. Note, nevertheless, these wise reflections of Camerlinck: "We should not forget that the Apostle's psychology is not the common psychology. There are, as it were, two persons in his consciousness, — his own person and the Person of the Spirit. An Apostle who has the Spirit of God may write, "I tell the truth, I lie not, my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Ghost." This bold saying is not John's, it is Paul's (Rom. ix. 1), who did not have his epistle written by his disciples. An Apostle might appropriate what Jesus in the Fourth Gospel says of Himself, "My testimony is true because I am not alone,

their assistance was not confined to the part of mere secretaries writing under the dictation of their master,[1] but that, to a greater or less degree, they clothed his spoken words in their own language. Elsewhere we have seen how Saint Jerome gives this explanation of the differences in style which mark the Second Epistle of Saint Peter from the First.[2] This hypothesis would quite quash the principal objection brought by Rationalistic Exegesis against the authenticity of our Sacred Book. I confine myself, however, to merely calling attention to it: for one thing, because I do not know surely whether it can be lawfully upheld, and, for the other, feeling as I do, that it is superfluous after all that has just been said.

Even this short study shows that there is nothing in the Fourth Gospel to prevent us from agreeing in the verdict of all antiquity that it was penned by John, the son of Zebedee. Nor is that all; it is befitting to add that from what we know of this Apostle from other sources he was predestined, as it were, to gather up the loftiest evangelical teachings, and to exhibit the Divine Saviour to us in a more striking light than his predecessors had done.

Such a knowledge of the Christ was, firstly, the fruit of the pre-eminent graces which the predilection of Jesus had lavished on the dearly beloved disciple: perhaps John's education, and especially his natural character, had contributed thereto. He would seem, indeed, owing to his family's position, to have had a more cultivated mind than his companions in the Apostleship: he is the son of a fisherman, undoubtedly, but of a master fisher who employs many workmen in his service;[3] his mother,

but I and He that sent Me." (John viii. 16) And it is with this meaning that "the disciple that Jesus loved" can write, "He that hath seen gives testimony thereto, and his testimony is true." *De Quarti Evangelii Auctore*, pars altera, p. 329, note 2.

[1] P. Calmes does not hesitate to ascribe a goodly share in the revision of S. John's Gospel to his Disciples. *Comment se sont Formés les Évangiles*, p. 57, 3d ed.; cf. *L'Évangile Selon S. Jean*, Introduction.

[2] See *The Last Years of Saint Paul*, chap. xii. p. 293, note 3.

[3] Mark i. 20.

Salome, is among the train of Galilean women who follow Jesus and "ministered unto Him of their substance;"[1] also among the holy women who purchase the sweet spices wherewith to anoint the Saviour's dead body.[2] He himself is so well known at the Palace of the High Priest that his word is sufficient to introduce Peter within its gates.[3]

Still more than his education, his inborn enthusiasm, his instinctively religious soul, made John prepared to hear and to retain the loftiest revelations of the Master. From their first meeting he won the heart of Jesus, by responding on the spot to His summons; without an instant's hesitation, without any reservation, he left all to follow Him.[4] Often thereafter did the Divine Master have to moderate the fire of youth which made Salome's child a "Son of the Thunderbolt."[5] We have seen him amid the disciples, calling down Heaven's fire on the Samaritans who refused to entertain them;[6] forbidding any one that was not of their company to cast out devils in the Saviour's Name;[7] claiming for himself and his brother James the foremost places in the Kingdom that was to come.[8] Jesus pardoned much in that heart which He knew to be so warm and generous and devoted, more than any other capable of loving and understanding Him. Accordingly, not content with counting him in the little circle of three Apostles whom he called to be witnesses of the raising of Jairus' daughter,[9] of His Transfiguration,[10] of His Agony,[11] He reserved a special place for him in His affections, a sort of primacy. All knew that he was "the disciple that Jesus loved," His confidant, and so when, at the Last Supper, Peter wished to know which of the Twelve would betray Him, it was to John, then resting his head on the Lord's bosom, that

[1] Matt. xxviii. 55, 56. Mark xv. 40, 41. Luke viii. 3.
[2] Mark xvi. 1.
[3] Ibid., xviii. 15, 16.
[4] Matt. iv. 21, 22.
[5] Mark iii. 17.
[6] Luke ix. 52–56.
[7] Mark ix. 37, 38.
[8] Ibid., x. 36–40.
[9] Ibid., v. 22–43.
[10] Matt. xvii. 1–9. Mark ix. 1–8. Luke ix. 28–36.
[11] Matt. xxvii. 3, 27. Mark xiv. 32, 33.

he addressed his question.[1] It is true that, like his fellow-witnesses of the Agony, the son of Zebedee slumbered at his post in Gethsemane, but the approach of danger awakened him, and from that moment he never quitted the Master. Alone he followed Him all along that way of sorrow to the Pontiff's Palace, to Pilate's Prætorium; he alone of the Apostles was on Calvary with the holy women, and there he received from the expiring Saviour, as his heritage, Mary.[2]

Thereafter the one same roof covered the two beings whom Jesus had loved the most. There they lived on His memory, His love: Mary repeated to John the Divine sayings which Saint Luke testifies "she had faithfully treasured in her heart."[3] Now these words she had gathered up not only during their long sojourn in Nazareth, but in the course of the three years of evangelical wanderings, when, in the train of the holy women, she had accompanied Jesus, listening to Him as never mother listened to her son, for she *knew* Who He was, that in Him the Word of God was living and speaking. It may be that until Pentecost these memories remained voiceless and more or less indistinct in Mary's soul, like letters graven in the gloom, but at the glorious outburst of that great day, they were illumined with new brightness. In her, as in all, the Saviour's promise was fully accomplished, "that the Paraclete would come in His Name, and bring all things to the minds of His disciples whatsoever He had spoken to them."[4]

There is small room to doubt that Jesus reserved His loftiest teachings for Mary and the Apostle whom He loved so dearly that He gave him to His Mother to be a son to her.[5] These divine thoughts, held in common by Mary and John, furnished the food of their meditations during the years they dwelt together. Is it at all astonishing that they made of this Apostle "The Theologian," over and beyond all other divines, according to the ex-

[1] John xii. 23–27. [2] Matt. xxvi. 36–46. John xviii. 15; xix. 25, 26.
[3] Luke ii. 51. [4] John xiv. 26. [5] Ibid., xix. 26.

pression of the ancients,[1] as he is the most eminent of all mystical writers; for, with him, all light turns to love, and that love did, if not create, at least develop, in the "dearly beloved of Jesus" that contemplative genius which is the distinctive character of his writings. "The eyes of the heart being enlightened"[2] in him, attained such power that in gazing on the Master's teachings, they pierced depths never fathomed by any other, not even by Saint Paul. To John we owe the priceless privilege of worshipping in full enlightenment our most touching Mysteries: the Eucharist, the outpouring of the Paraclete in our souls, our union with the Heavenly Father in Jesus, and through Jesus. From him, as much as from Saint Paul, the Fathers and the Doctors of the Councils drew the principal elements of our faith as far as concerns its essential dogmas: — the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption.

And this positive Theology is far from being all we owe to John. What transcends all else in him is that which he absorbed from his intimacy with the Master, in those tender talks wherein Jesus, raising his mind above the earthly royalty he still coveted, revealed to him a higher world,[3] those mystical regions, where the heart, disdaining aught that is not of God, yearns only to be united and live and lose itself in Him. Burning as are the accents of Saint Paul when he exalts the Divine Love,[4] none has spoken of it as Saint John has, none ever so wrought that passion in men's souls. For them he gathered up the Saviour's urgent appeals, those utterances which, coming from Jesus' Heart, re-echo in the very depths of men's being, and make them captives unto Him: "And you will not come unto Me, Who will give you life! . . . Abide in Me and I in you! . . . Father, may the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me be in them and I in them!"[5]

Who hearkening to these accents can deceive himself?

[1] Ἰωάννην τὸν Ἑβραίων θεόλογον. Eusebius, *Præp. Ev.* xi. 18.
[2] Ephes. i. 18.
[3] Mark x. 35–40.
[4] 1 Cor. xiii.
[5] John v. 40; xv. 4; xvii. 26.

To consider them as merely a feeble echo of the earlier ecstasies, a far-away reverberation of the Glad Tidings repeated by some unknown, is to err in good faith, I admit, but it is unquestionably to misapprehend the very accent of truth in history. In the event, this hypothesis will do small honor to those who have fabricated it. Men will once more come to believe, with us, that John is the Author of a work which can only be his; and this because there is something stronger than any reasoning, and that is evidence. For the Author successfully to confront the cloudy conceptions, the fantastic "Æons" of the Alexandrians, with the Christ, living and loving, and to be able to make the Word made Flesh speak as he does, he must needs not only "have heard with his ears, seen with his eyes, touched with his hands," he must have loved Him with his whole heart; nay, more, he must have been "he whom Jesus loved."

CHAPTER X.

THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

After an appreciation of the author of the last Gospel, the next in order is a consideration of his work: one of the sublimest ever penned by mortal man, even granting that its inspiration was from on High. Certain features do indeed disclose its humanity. According to Saint Epiphanius,[1] Saint John had all but reached his hundredth year when he composed it. It is, therefore, the work of a patriarch who is writing under divine impulse, and yet, as it would seem, still subject to the influence of advanced age. Thus any one can remark, for example, the repetition of words and thoughts so characteristic of the aged, when they refer to old recollections or strive to make themselves better understood;[2] then there is, too, the assistance of his disciples, who lend their aid to the writer and eagerly confirm his revered testimony.[3]

The question has already been mooted as to how far this co-operation on the part of the brethren may have extended. At the very least, they wrote down what the Apostle dictated to them. If such was their task, they fulfilled it with scrupulous fidelity, jotting down the slightest details of time and place, always respecting the various forms assumed, according to the inspiration of the moment, by the speech of their venerable master. And perhaps that religious care to reproduce his language may account for the lack of nicely balanced proportions in the several narratives, some seeming like an unfinished sketch,[4]

[1] S. Epiphanius, *Hær.* ii. 12.
[2] Patrizzi, *De Evangeliis*, Book i. iv.; *Quæst.* ii. 9.
[3] John xxi. 24.
[4] Jesus' interview with Nicodemus, and the unexpected appearance of the Greeks, asking to see Jesus. John iii.; xii. 20–23.

others presenting us with a carefully elaborated picture.[1] The same holds good as regards the discourses: here summed up in a few words, and again developed at length. In almost all of them it is apparent that John is giving utterance to his recollections just as they recur to him, fragmentarily, in detached phrases and sentences, oblivious of the connection which they must have had in the original conversations, as the Saviour developed them.[2]

This unevenness in its composition in no wise robs the work either of its lively interest or its sublime conception, which have made it, to use the Fathers' favorite expression,[3] "the Gospel of the Spirit." Neither do they interfere with its design, concisely set forth, of proving that Jesus is God. This demonstration consists in showing that four essential attributes of the Godhead are made manifest in the doings and sayings of the Christ: He is the Omnipotent, as His miracles bear witness; He is Light, Life, and Love most of all, and this as their fountain-head and in all their fulness.

The arguments urged to support his demonstration are drawn from the evangelical occurrences. As a rule John records them in the order of their happening; and nevertheless it is possible to note a progessive movement in the march of ideas, which warrants the division of the Holy Book into three parts. The first recounts the very various greetings accorded by the world to the Light bestowed on it by the Incarnate Word; the second describes the implacable resistance it met with from the creatures of Darkness; the third describes the eclipse of the Light, but only an apparent eclipse, since from it Jesus emerges in a more striking manifestation of His Divinity: His love attaining its climax in the Eucharist and the sacrifice of the Cross. None but God could have loved so greatly as this.[4]

[1] The conversation between the Saviour and the Samaritan woman; the healing of the man born blind, and the raising of Lazarus, etc. John iv. ix. xi.

[2] Patrizzi, *Commentarium in Joannem, Proœmium.*

[3] Clement of Alexandria, quoted by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*), vi. xiv. S. Epiphanius, *Hœr.* li. 19.

[4] The first part comprises the first four chapters of the work; the

But is not the presentation of the Saviour's work under an allegorical form, treating it as a struggle between Light and Darkness, just one of those Alexandrian conceptions which modern Exegesis is so fond of pointing out in the construction of the work, notably in the Prologue, declaring them utterly irreconcilable with the Jewish character of the son of Zebedee? What has been said elsewhere[1] of the influence brought to bear on John's manner of thinking and speaking by his long sojourn in Ephesus sufficiently explains these seeming contradictions. To what, after all is said, does this Prologue amount, which they gratuitously ascribe to some Egyptian metaphysician? To the three first sentences of the Book.

The first reveals, in His eternal Essence, the divine Person incarnate in Jesus: —

> In the Beginning was the Word,
> And the Word was in God,
> And the Word was God.

The second determines His part in the Creation: —

> He was in the Beginning in God;
> All things were made by Him,
> And without Him nothing was made that was made.

The last phrase sums up in two words the ministry of Jesus: the divine Saviour offering the world light and life, and the world rejecting them: —

> In Him was the Life,
> And the Life was the Light of men,[2]
> And the Light shineth in Darkness,
> And the Darkness comprehended it not.

second, the eight following, from v. to xii.; the third, the eight chapters consecrated to the narratives of the Last Supper, the Passion, and the Resurrection, from xii. to xx.; the xxi. and last chapter would seem to have been added as an afterthought, by the Author, and for rather different reasons.

[1] See preceding Chapter.

[2] The Life existing in the Word, in its fulness and as unchanging fountain-head of all things that are, is not a hidden force, working in secret, without other manifestation than the activity it communicates to every-

Such, in its principal features, is the foreword to the Fourth Gospel. What is there about it that might not have emanated from the mind and fallen from the lips of this Apostle? John was a man gifted with sublime visions; no eye has pierced further into the vast deeps of the celestial life: thereof his Apocalypse is witness. Instinctively, as it were, and as a familiar friend he goes straight to the very heart of the Godhead, when contemplating the origin of all things. True, these lofty considerations which constitute his own peculiar domain are given a coloring and style which appear borrowed. Nevertheless we must beware of mistaking them: though the terms be foreign, the Hebraic construction always underlies them in its essential forms. The thoughts follow according to the laws of parallelism, in short sentences, connected by a simple repetition of words; the phrases have a harmonious rhythm and are disposed in groups like the strophes of a song. This, as we know, was the distinctive character of the poetry and of all elevated style in Hebrew writers; it was their native tongue, whenever enthusiasm and higher flights of thought or passion thrilled them. For all these reasons the mystical Prologue of the Word is attributable to the genius of Israel: there is nothing to forbid us ascribing it to the Galilean fisherman, who under the tutelage of Jesus became the sublime Seer of his race.

Furthermore, it is impossible to disallow the intimate relationship in doctrine, if not in language, existing between the Fourth Gospel and the Epistles of Saint Paul. Beyond the fact that the latter assigns to Jesus the same privileges which Saint John accords Him, — for example, that of being the Redeemer of all humankind, whereof He wished to become a part, and at the same time the equal of His Father, by Whom He is seated in the Heavens;[1] Saint Paul does, moreover, represent the

thing which it penetrates. This Life is Light; it illumines everything in the man that receives it, not only his intelligence, but his heart, his feelings, his impulses to will and to do. Cf. Matt. vi. 22–23. Luke xi. 34, 36.

[1] Compare particularly Rom. i. 3; viii. 3, 32. Gal. iv. 4–6. 2 Cor. viii. 9.

Christ as the very Wisdom of God, consubstantial with Him from the origin of all things.[1] What is this but that same Word which "in the Beginning, was in God and was God," according to the expression used by Saint John in conformity with the philosophic idiom of his times.[2] Thus, then, the Fourth Evangelist was in no sense an innovator: his conceptions are identical with those of his predecessor, or are logically derived from principles laid down by him. Nor is it at all surprising that one Apostle should have developed what another Apostle had expressed before him, since both drew from the same source, which is the Truth, Incarnate in Jesus. Only a superficial critic, after studying the sublime Prologue, could come to the conclusion that another than John must be its author.

What follows immediately upon this masterly passage attests still more clearly the hand that penned it. Coming down from the eternal heights, where he had soared, and reverting suddenly to the practical purpose of his work, the Apostle invokes, as foremost proof of the Saviour's Divinity, evidence which he deems the strongest of all: that of John the Baptist. It is hard to conceive of an Alexandrian of the second or third generation

[1] 1 Cor. i. 24–30; viii. 6. Colos. i. 15–17. Hebr. i.

[2] Renan agrees that it is not merely "a question of vocabulary" (*S. Paul*, 274–275). Elsewhere he writes: "The belief that Jesus was the 'Logos' of the Alexandrian Philosophy must have suggested itself at an early date and in a very logical fashion. From the year 68, he is called the *Word of God*. . . . The doctrines of the Epistle to the Colossians present striking analogies with those of the Fourth Gospel, Jesus being represented in the above-named Epistle as the image of the invisible God, the first begotten of all creatures, by whom everything was created; who was before all things, and by whom all things exist, in whom the fulness of the divinity dwells corporeally" (*Vie de Jésus*, App. pp. 479, 480). Elsewhere again: "In the later writings [of S. Paul] we find a theory of the Christ considered as a sort of divine person, a theory quite analogous to that of the *Logos* which, later on, was to find its definite form in the writings attributed to S. John. . . . The anterior and certainly authentic writings of Paul contain the germ of this new language" (*L'Antechrist*, p. 76, etc.). Prof. Harnack says the same: "Was not this astonishing formula [the Logos] prepared, even led up to by the messianic speculation of Paul and certain other writers of the earlier period?" *What is Christianity*, p. 214. Cf. Lepin, *Jésus Messie et Fils de Dieu*, pp. 142, 143, etc.

of Christians, laying such stress on the words of the Precursor; as for John, on the contrary, nothing could be more natural, since he had been one of the disciples of the Baptist: it was in obedience to his words, declaring that Jesus was the "Lamb of God," that he had followed the Divine Master.[1]

And so in what bold relief he makes the figure of the last Seer of the Old Covenant stand out! "There was a man sent by God, whose name was John; he came to bear witness to the Light;" then, fearing lest any one mistake his meaning, "he was not the Light," he adds; "but he came to give testimony to the Light that all men might believe through him," and thereby become "sons of God."[2] It is in this mission of the Forerunner that he enshrines and enunciates the master-thought which animates his whole work: that the Incarnate Word ever remains God even as is the Supreme Being which begot Him.

> **And the Word was made Flesh,**
> **And dwelt among us,**
> **And we saw His Glory;**
> **A Glory like unto that which a Son**
> **An only Son, receiveth from His Father**
> **Full of Grace and of Truth.**[3]

"And we have beheld His Glory," all of us, the companions of His Ministry, but first and foremost, we, John the Baptist and the Apostle John, eye-witnesses of that Glory which manifested itself in wonders without number, thus fulfilling the figures and promises of the Old Testament. Instead of the bright cloud which overshadowed the tent of the Ark in token of God's dwelling amid His people,[4] the Word Divine has pitched His tent, and abides in the deepest privacy of our souls;[5] in place of the rigorous Law of Moses, grace and truth are poured out upon our souls in all their fulness, by Jesus;[6] in-

[1] John i. 29, 35–40. [2] Ibid., 6–13. [3] Ibid., 14.
[4] Exod. xxv. 8, 29–45. Ps. lxxxiii. 2. Zach. ii. 10.
[5] Ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν. John i. 14.
[6] Ibid., i. 17.

stead of the fearsome God no Jew could look upon and live, the only Son, — only-begotten God, says another reading,[1] — He that was in the Bosom of the Father, reveals to us this Supreme Being, as invisible and inaccessible to such as are not born anew, in Jesus, and through Jesus, unto the life of the Spirit.[2]

Like a true son of Israel, John delights on dwelling on the correspondence of the New to the Old Covenant; and, as all old men do, in lingering over youthful days, when, as a disciple of the Baptist, he heard him tender his solemn homage to Jesus: "I saw the Spirit come down from Heaven as a Dove, and rest upon Him. As for me, I knew Him not, but He that sent me to baptize with water said to me, He upon Whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining, He it is that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and I gave testimony that this is the Son of God.[3]

After the testimony of the Precursor, so memorable to the Evangelist and to which he reverts again and again,[4] it is a very natural transition that leads him to speak of his own calling and thereafter to that of the other disciples. Thus he enters on the first part of his work; the welcome which the world gives to the Light, offered it by the Incarnate Word.

The hearts of those first to be called — John, Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathaniel[5] — responded generously to His message. The accents, even the glance of Jesus, went to the very depths of their souls and constrained them to

[1] Ὁ μονογενὴς θεός. This reading is that of the best authorized MSS.: the *Vaticanus*, the *Sinaiticus*, the *Codex Ephraemi*, the *Codex Regius Parisiensis* (L.). See the comments of the Fathers (which are very contradictory and uncertain) in Alford's *Greek Testament, in loc.*

[2] In Himself, God is precisely what the Jews imagined Him, — the Supreme Being, inaccessible, unfathomable, an ineffable Being, of Whom we can say no more than that He is the Infinite. He escapes the grasp of the most gifted minds. Only through Jesus, and in Jesus, can we attain unto Him: "God," says S. John, "no man hath ever seen; the only Son Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath made Him known." John i. 18. Cf. Ibid., v. 37, 38.

[3] Ibid., i. 32–34.

[4] Ibid., iii. 23–27; v. 33–36; x. 40–42.

[5] Ibid., i. 35–51.

leave all and follow Him. This is true, too, of those that witnessed the Saviour's earliest miracles: at Cana, where He turned the water into wine;[1] at Jerusalem, during the Passover Festival, when Jesus obtains such mastery over men's minds by the wonders He worked that He can venture with impunity to drive the traffickers from the Temple with scourge in hand.[2]

Thus far the Glory of Jesus shines forth unobstructed. And yet the spirit of rebellion was even then seething beneath the surface. Many witnesses of the Miracles performed in the Holy City had declared themselves openly for Him, but Jesus, fathoming their hearts, "did not trust Himself to them, for that He knew all men."[3] Saint John notes among the Jews of Jerusalem, these first puffs of the smouldering opposition which was soon to break out in fiery flames; and yet, to show that the very best among them were ready to receive the New Faith, he begins by relating the interview between Nicodemus and the Saviour. This Scribe was the peer of any of the members of the Sanhedrin in intelligence as well as in experience of life; nay more, he excelled them in rectitude, since, as soon as he recognized the Truth, he acknowledged it; and yet, in his first converse with the Lord, he evidences no comprehension of the new birth wrought by water and the Holy Ghost, a necessary condition of all human life. "How can that be?" he asks in all simplicity. "What!" Jesus answers, "art thou a master in Israel and knowest not these things? How then can I converse with thee? If I speak to you of earthly things, you believe Me not; if I speak to you of heavenly things,[4] how will you believe Me?" This appre-

[1] John ii. 1–11. "This was the first Miracle of Jesus; He worked it at Cana in Galilee; thereby He manifested His Glory and His disciples believed in Him,"—in His Divinity, for the words "Glory, Brightness," are always used by S. John to designate the Divine Being in the Brilliancy of His Splendor. John i. 14; v. 44; xi. 40; xvii. 5, 22, 24.

[2] Ibid., ii. 13–17.

[3] Ibid., 23–25.

[4] "Heavenly things" (John iii. 12), that is to say, the Mystery of the Redemption, whereto Jesus strives to raise the limited intelligence of His questioner. And, indeed, if we be not "born again of the Spirit," how

ciation of the Faith, at the outset, Saint John tells us, was evidenced by but a few chosen souls: a scanty number of Galileans, among the Jews; the sinful woman of Samaria and her fellow-countrymen;[1] the official of Capharnaum, the first-fruit of the Gentile world. Thus was fulfilled the saying which closes, or rather comments[2] on, the testimony of John Baptist: "He that believeth on the Son hath life everlasting, he that believeth not on the Son, hath not life."[3]

With the fifth chapter begins the second and most circumstantiated of the three parts of the work, to wit, the description of the struggle between light and darkness, between Jesus and the unbelieving throng. The debate begins at Bethsaida Pool, its occasion being the healing of the paralytic by Jesus. It was a Sabbath day. The hateful Pharisaism of the Jews is displayed by their presuming to forbid the doing on that day of any sort of work, even one of charity.[4] Jesus' response is couched in terms of

can we understand that God so loved the world that He willed that His only Son should die on the Cross to save it? (John iii. 14–16). This faith in the Redeemer-Christ makes for the salvation of the lowly who bow before the Truth revealed from on High, even when it passes their comprehension; but, when disdained by the haughty, it works their own condemnation. Thus, of itself, it marks the cleavage betwixt the destinies of mankind, without any need that the Son, "Who is not come to judge," should pronounce sentence (ibid., iii. 7–19).

[1] John dwells at great length on this scene, striking as it is from every point of view. None, indeed, gives clearer evidence of the power of Faith to illumine the mind. Here we see Jesus displaying to a poor woman, enlightened by repentance, the mysteries of the supernatural life; bidding her worship the Father "in spirit and in truth;" making her glimpse, by means of that figure "of water springing up unto Eternal Life," the never-failing fountain-head of Life Divine, alone capable of quenching the thirst of holy souls. Ibid., iv. 14–23.

[2] This restriction I make simply because it seems so difficult, and perhaps of little moment, to decide, in the testimony of John Baptist, precisely as elsewhere in the talk with Nicodemus and many similar cases, just at what point the Saviour's words cease and the Evangelist's reflections thereon begin. I have already alluded to the fact that the Apostle does not mean to reproduce word for word all that his Master uttered: they are His thoughts which he sets forth, thoughts which he has so long meditated upon that he has made them his own, in so far that in hearkening to John we are really hearing but the voice of Jesus.

[3] John iii. 36.

[4] Ibid., v. 1–17.

one that is Master of the Sabbath as of all life: from all eternity "until now My Father worketh and I likewise work." Nor do the Jews fail to grasp the significance of this testimony which Jesus, furthermore, takes care to make as formal as possible, by telling them that all His Father does He does also; like Him raising the dead, giving life to whomsoever He sees fit. To have life in one's self and through one's self is a peculiar attribute of the Godhead. Jesus lays claims to it in set terms: "As the Father hath life in Himself, so He hath given to the Son, also, to have life in Himself."[1] For this cause, the Evangelist relates, the Jews, already resolved to make away with the despiser of their Observances, "sought the more to kill Him because He did not only break the Sabbath, but because He also said God was His Father, making Himself equal to God."[2]

Galilee was the chosen field of the Saviour's Ministry. There He had lived the thirty years of His Hidden Life; thence He drew, not only His first disciples, but the holy women who ministered to His wants and served Him; on it He fairly showered His instructions and miracles; there, doubtless more than anywhere else, did His words reach deeper down into the people's hearts. Full of such memories, John could not pass over in silence the deeds and words of Jesus while in that region. From it he takes the principal scene in the second part of his work, for Jesus, by announcing beforehand the founding of the Eucharist, reveals that He is God, since He has in Himself and communicates to men the Life Divine. The Evangelist reserves for later on, in the actual institution of the same Mystery, this exposition of Him as likewise God, by virtue of another of His attributes, of all the most winning, Love, which he displayed as no mere man ever could have done.

It was just after the multiplying of the loaves that John heard the Saviour asseverate anew His Godship. The throngs, in their enthusiasm over the Miracle, had

[1] John v. 19–26. [2] Ibid., 18.

followed Him into the Synagogue at Capharnaum. "I am the Living Bread come down from Heaven," the Saviour tells them. . . . "If any eat of this bread, he shall live forever; now, the bread which I give is My flesh, which I must give for the life of the world. . . . My flesh is meat indeed and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me and I in him. As My Father that sent Me is living [the very Life], and as I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me shall live by Me."[1] One must have eyes enlightened by faith not to be dazzled by such a mystery. The multitude murmured, "How can He give us His flesh to eat?" just as Nicodemus had answered, "How can these things be?" Even some of the disciples joined the mutterers, and many left Him never to return. The Twelve remained close to the Saviour. "And you," He said to them, "will you, too, leave Me?" Peter replies in the name of all: "To whom shall we go, Lord? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life. We know that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God!"[2] Assuredly under the circumstances this solemn profession must have touched the heart of the Master. But Peter was only the spokesman of the Apostles; he was not warranted to pledge the faith of the deserters. And this defection seemed all the harder to Jesus, because in the very ranks of those that had just sworn fidelity to Him He already descried "the betrayer."[3] Thus even in Galilee the conflict of light and darkness had not been a triumphant one.

Notwithstanding the great peril, the implacable hatred of the Jews, which awaited Him at Jerusalem, Jesus returned thither for the succeeding Feast of the Tabernacles; and immediately their wrath burst forth, more burning than ever, decisive even for the future, to the Evangelist's thinking, for the extended details he gives concerning this solemnity show the important place it held in his memory.

The Galilean kinsfolk of the Saviour — who, "even

[1] John vi. 48–59. [2] Ibid., 61–70. [3] Ibid., 71, 72.

they," sorrowfully adds the Apostle, "did not believe in Him"[1] — had urged Him in vain to accompany them to the Holy City, and there exhibit His all-powerfulness. He went there in His own good time, in the midst of the feastmaking. The populace ran after Him, much divided in opinion in His regard; some in His favor, others hesitating, none daring to come out openly for Him, out of fear of the Sanhedrin party, which had determined on taking Jesus and killing Him. But their timidity vanished on hearing Him. "It is a prophet; it is the Christ!" they cried aloud. The guards dispatched thrice by the Sanhedrin to arrest Him, themselves yielded to His ascendancy. Returning to their superiors, "Never man," they said, "spake like this man."[2]

So, for the time being, they must needs give up their plots of violence. Priests and Pharisees had no other recourse than to mingle with the throng and seek to recover their empire over it by interrupting the Saviour's discourses with their objections. This only offered Him another occasion for affirming still more explicitly that He is one, in nature and attributes, with the Supreme Being, whose Son He proclaimed Himself: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, but he shall have the light of life. . . . If I do judge, My judgment is true, because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me."

"Where is Thy Father?" his enemies interrupt.

And Jesus answers: "Neither Me do you know nor My Father; if you did know Me you would know My Father also. . . . You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world." And with all this, Saint John notes, "they did not understand that He said God was His Father."[3] They did understand Him,

[1] John vii. 5. [2] Ibid., 10, 53.

[3] As the Jews had shown themselves almost unanimous in their misunderstanding and rejection of their Saviour, in his Gospel S. John usually uses their name to designate the adversaries of Jesus; once and again, however, he does not fail to note that a chosen few from out the nation had believed in the divine Master. Midmost the events of the Feast of Tabernacles, he describes the Saviour as addressing these beautiful words

however, when, on their boasting of their being sons of Abraham, He made answer that that Patriarch had longed above all things to behold the days of that salvation which He, the Son of the Heavenly Father, should bring into the world, and that when God permitted him to see them beforehand he had been filled with joy.

"Thou art not yet fifty years old," they interjected, "and thou hast seen Abraham?"

"Of a truth, yea, verily, I say unto you," replied Jesus, "before Abraham was, I am."

He could not more clearly have declared Himself the Eternal. The Jewish priests rushed to grab up stones to slay Him; but He hid Himself and departed from the Temple.[1]

Once outside the Sanctuary, the populace for the most part protected Him. The healing of a man born blind, worked that day[2] by Him, had increased His popularity. He took advantage of this to repeat to those about Him the truths which their leaders,[3] obstinate in their blindness, had refused to see. "I am the Light of the world. . . . I am the Good Shepherd, I am come to give My Life

to a small group of believers: "as He said these things many believed in Him. Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed, and you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free.'" John viii. 30, 31, 32. To be a disciple of Jesus it is not enough to hearken to His words, or meditate on them to a greater or less extent; we must penetrate into them as into a Sanctuary, there "abide," as it were, permanently therein, communicating with them in all they have to give of Life and Light. The fruit of this union is a knowledge of the truth which does not limit itself to pure speculations; rather spontaneously it translates what it believes into deeds.

[1] John viii. 52–59.

[2] Ibid., ix.

[3] Solely to the haughty Pharisees surrounding the man born blind does the Saviour address that austere saying: "I am come into this world to provoke a judgment, that they who see not may see, and that they who see may become blind." John ix. 39. "To provoke a judgment," that is, a selective opinion, one that shall mark the difference, and discern between, those blind ones who, suffering in the night wherein they languish, seek to grope their way forth, and those others that see, leaders and teachers of Israel. Infatuated with the revelations made to their race, the latter refused to see anything beyond them. What could the Saviour do except abandon these to their blindness and keep the full enlightment for the lowly-minded, so eager for Heaven-born Light?

for My sheep," but to give it as God, Sovereign Master of life and death; for that life, He adds, "no man takes away from Me, but 'tis I that lay it down Myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it up."[1]

The outspoken hatred of the Sanhedrin made it impossible for Jesus to linger longer in Jerusalem. He departed, not to return thither till the following winter at the Feast of the Dedication. Then, more emphatically than ever, He told the Sanhedrin members, that, as Son of God, He had the same Nature as has He. "I and My Father," He said to them, "are One."[2] And as they picked up stones to cast at Him, "For which of My works would you stone Me?" He asked.

"Because of Thy Blasphemy," they answered, "because, being a man, Thou makest Thyself God!"

Far from retracting a word, but merely calling to witness the wonders He had worked in their presence, it is, He tells them, "in order that you may believe and that you may know that the Father is in Me and I in My Father."

Enraged again the members of the Sanhedrin sprang to seize Him; but He escaped out of their hands and got out of Jerusalem. He was not to return till He came to meet death there.[3]

The untimely end of His friend Lazarus was destined to bring Him back into the neighborhood, to Bethany,

[1] John x. 1–21.

[2] It was when reverting to the allegory of the Good Shepherd and his sheep, whereof He had made use in the foregoing Feast of Tabernacles, that the Saviour is led to make this declaration: "You are not My sheep," He tells the members of the Sanhedrin; "My sheep hear My voice . . . and they follow Me, and I give them Life everlasting, and they shall not perish forever, and no man shall steal them from Me. My Father that hath given them Me, is greater than all and no man can snatch them from the Father. I and the Father are one." John x. 26–30. This Unity proclaimed by Jesus, giving Him the same power as the Father has, over all life, comes not simply from the fact that there is a community of will and action between Them, but from the fact that He is the Son of that Father, and that there is between Them a unity of Substance and Life. So the Jews understood Him; for they forthwith accuse Him of making Himself God.

[3] John x. 22–38

very shortly. He comes thither to give the most striking testimony to His Godhead, by breathing new life into an already corrupted corpse. "I am the Resurrection and the Life," He says to Martha weeping at His feet; "he that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me, shall never die. Believest thou this?"

And Martha answers, "Yea, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God that art come into this world."[1]

This Miracle was so widely noised about, that at the following Passover, when Jesus came thither to deliver Himself up into His enemies' hands, Jerusalem was still deeply moved thereby.[2] Accordingly Saint John, when making his selection of Evangelical narratives, has made the raising of Lazarus the last scene of importance, and, as it were, the final act in that dramatic strife between Darkness and Light, a struggle as ungrateful and well-nigh fruitless as he had foretold that it would be, in the Prologue of his work: "The Light shone in Darkness and the Darkness comprehended it not."[3]

Some features, selected here and there from the doings of Jesus, complete the tableau of this sad drama. Around the board of the risen Lazarus appears the little group of friends and faithful Apostles; but even among the latter a traitor, Judas, murmuring against Mary Magdalene, when she lavishes the costly ointments on her Saviour.[4] The hate of the Sanhedrin party growls more fiercely than ever round about their dwelling; they are planning to kill Lazarus along with Jesus, in order to suppress this living miracle.[5] Many, it is true, do not share their blind frenzy, but these dare not declare themselves for fear of being driven out of the Synagogue.[6] As for the multitude, transported by the resurrection of Lazarus, it runs on ahead of Jesus and makes His entry a triumphal one;[7]

[1] John xi. 27.
[2] Ibid., xii. 9–19.
[3] Ibid., i. 5.
[4] Ibid., xii. 1–8.
[5] Ibid., 9–11.
[6] Ibid., 42.
[7] Ibid., 12–16.

an ephemeral enthusiasm, which changes within a few days into death cries: "Away with Him! Crucify Him!"[1]

But one bright ray lightens up this gloomy picture: the entrance on the scene of certain Greeks asking to see Jesus,[2] and in their persons fortelling that the Gentile world, by giving themselves shortly to the Christ, would embrace that Cross on which He was about to die. The Jews, witnessing this scene, give no heed whatever to it; indeed their obstinacy constrains the Saviour to abandon them to their reprobate nature. Not without great grief does He do so, His Heart actually breaking, as He utters that supreme warning: —

"Yet a little while the Light is still with you. . . . While you have the Light, believe in the Light, that you may be children of the Light."

Vain appeal! Their hearts remain as hard as ever. Jesus turned away from them and the doom of Israel was sealed.[3]

Hence the Saviour's cry of anguish, at the thought of His Cross and the scanty fruit it would reap from His Blood, shed for so many self-blinded men, these Jews in particular who dared go so far as to call down His Blood on their own heads.

"Now is My soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour, and nevertheless it is for this I am come. Father, glorify Thy Name! . . . And as for Me, if I be lifted up from earth I will draw all things unto Myself."

"Now this He said," notes Saint John, "signifying what death He should die." Thereupon a Voice comes from Heaven to comfort Him, as shortly the Angel of Gethsemane would do: "I have both glorified it and I will glorify it again." It was the Father's response to that doleful supplication of His Son, in testimony that as these two Divine Persons are but one, their all-powerful-

[1] John xix. 15. [2] Ibid., xii. 20–23. [3] Ibid., 34–37.

ness would turn to eternal glory this work of Salvation now under an apparent eclipse.[1]

On bringing to a close his narratives of the Saviour's Public Life, Saint John, too, casts a sad backward glance over those three almost barren years, wherein God Himself, speaking and acting through the Christ, performed so many prodigies. What obstacle, then, had hindered the workings of that sovereign bounty? Pride! that eternal and insurmountable barrier, which God, when creating man a free agent, had bound Himself to respect. This haughty spirit had risen to such a pitch among the Jews that, by a righteous punishment, the people chosen by God to beget the Saviour, disowned and rejected Him. What did the Divine Master demand to consummate the glorious destinies of Israel? Nothing beyond the powers of all, of the simple and lowly especially. This John points out in a few words borrowed from the preceding discourses of the Saviour, wherein He gives us, as it were, the kernel of His teaching:[2] —

Believe in Me, and through Me, in the Father that sent Me, with Whom I am One. Through that Faith you shall find in you that which I am come to bring unto the world, Light and Life; My mission is altogether one of mercy and salvation, for I came not into the world to chasten it for its opposition: to that end of

[1] John xii. 23–33.

[2] In this series of sentences which I have tried to set down in a methodical fashion, it is easy to recognize all of the Saviour's teachings scattered through the Fourth Gospel: "Then Jesus cried out saying, He that believeth in Me, believeth not in Me, but in Him that sent Me, and he that beholdeth Me, beholdeth Him that sent Me (v. 36; vi. 38; vii. 29; viii. 12; x. 38). I am come, the Light of this world, that whosoever believeth in Me should not abide in Darkness (iii. 19, 21; viii. 12; ix. 5; xii. 35). And if any one hear My words and keepeth them not, I do not judge him, for I am not come to judge, but to save the world. He that rejecteth Me and he that receiveth not My words hath what judgeth him; the Word which I have spoken shall judge him in the Last Day (iii. 17–19, v. 24; viii. 15; ix. 39). For I do not speak of Myself, but the Father that sent Me hath commanded what I must needs say and how I should say it, and I know that His commandment is Life Everlasting. Therefore the things I say, I say as the Father hath told Me (v. 30; vi. 63; vii. 16; viii. 28, 38)."

judgment My word is enough of itself, — accepted, it saves; rejected, it condemns.[1]

The opening lines of the third part of the Gospel, consecrated to the Last Supper and the Passion, are couched in words of peculiar solemnity: "Now, before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour was come to pass from this world to His Father, having loved His own who were in the world He loved them to the end. . . . Knowing that the Father had given Him all things into His hands, and that He came from God and would return to God. . . ."[2]

Such almighty power was needful to work that wonder which Saint John with good reason regards as the most striking proof of the Divinity of Jesus: the Eucharist, perpetuating the Sacrifice of the Cross. Love, even more than Light and Life, reveals the Godhead. Because He loves, God is one in Three Persons; because He loves, He has created, redeemed, and destined us to everlasting blessedness. In Jesus, likewise, Love, more than aught else, gives the keynote, the revealing token, of His Nature: no man has loved, none can love, as He did, because He loves as God. The Jews clung too closely to earthly things to understand so lofty a testimony. We have seen how they rebelled at the idea of eating His flesh. Jesus does not revert to it again in their presence. But to Nicodemus, more fit to grasp the truth than the common run of Rabbis, He says expressly: "God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have Life Everlasting."[3] To the Apostles alone He reserved the full revelation of the secret of His love.[4]

[1] John xii. 44–50. [2] Ibid., xiii. 1–3. [3] Ibid., iii. 16.

[4] This evidence is of such an exalted order that Jesus reveals it to none save the eleven faithful Apostles. As a farewell token of His tenderness and clear-sightedness, He induces the traitor to withdraw. Judas goes out into the night (John xiii. 21, 30). Now in that Upper Chamber, where none but pure hearts, illumined by the Eucharist, remain, Jesus, Whom the presence of the guilty soul oppressed, thereafter speaks of naught save brightness and glory: that Glory of the Son of Man, in Whom God reveals Himself, and Whom, by that very fact, He clothes with His Brightness (John xiii. 31, 32).

Absorbed as ever in his main purpose, John does not, like the Synoptics, relate the details concerning the institution of the Eucharist. What he deems important and what he groups together from his recollections of the Last Supper, are the sentences whereby the Master, commenting on the Act He had just accomplished, offers in evidence to His disciples that only a God, the God living in the Christ, is powerful enough to work in men's souls the prodigious effects of the sacred rite. These marvels of Grace Jesus refers to as a comforting compensation, seeing how saddened they are over the fast approaching hour of parting: "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. . . . I go to prepare a place for you. . . . and I will come again to take you, that where I am, there you may be with Me."[1] Nor need any disquiet themselves as to how He will accomplish this upbringing of our perishable humanity into the bosom of Divinity. The way whereby He will lead us thither, or, rather, which of itself will bring us there, is Jesus. By uniting, abandoning ourselves to Him, we penetrate through Him to the Bosom of the Father, with Whom He is one, and consequently we must attain to the very fountain-head of Truth and Life.[2]

But these consolations only looked to the future, that time, maybe far distant, when the Saviour would return. Till then, who would replace Jesus in their hearts? The Divine Master steeled their souls by the assurance that His presence would not long be lacking them: "I will not leave you orphans," He says, "I am going to disappear in the world's eyes; yet a little while and it shall see Me no more, but you shall see Me; you shall feel my Presence, because I live and you also shall live," with that same Life, the supernatural Life, the divine, the only true Life. "In that day you shall know that I am in my Father, and you will be in Me and I in you."[3] This mysterious Presence every Christian has known and felt: it is Jesus, dwelling among us, in the Sacrament of

[1] John xiv. 1, 3. [2] Ibid., 6. [3] Ibid., 18–20.

the Altar, and, within us, by the Grace communicated to us by His Life.

To this first fruit of the Eucharist the Saviour adds another of such great worth that the Apostles, to thoroughly believe it, must needs devote all their attention to His words. Separated from Jesus though they may seem to be, yet they shall remain with Him in a community of power, in so far as to perform greater works than His. Only let them pray in His Name, and there is nothing that will not be vouchsafed them for the success of their ministry. No seed sown by them shall be lost; it shall bear fruit, if not at once, at least in the generations to follow, to all such as the Christ calleth to Himself.[1]

One last fruit of the Eucharist — not the least admirable — is that it draws down into our souls, together with Jesus and His Father, that Divine Person Who, in the bosom of the Trinity, is the common tie of Their Love. In all the workings of the Holy Ghost within us, He performs an act of God. He descends and abides there, even as do the Father and the Son; of past things He renews the teachings of the Christ. The future He unveils to eyes clear-sighted enough to pierce it;[2] He teaches us all things, even such as the Saviour had judged His disciples incapable of taking in, prior to His coming upon them.[3] And whence does He draw these powers, manifestly Divine? From the Father, from Whom everything proceeds, and Who sends Him; but likewise from the Son, by Whom the Father sends Him, and from the plenitude whereof the Spirit receives that which He gives. "He shall glorify Me," says Jesus, "because He shall receive that which is Mine and shall shew it you.[4] All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine;" and the Holy Ghost that proceedeth from us both, as from one only and the same Principle of Being, is full of Me. In what higher terms could Jesus have asserted that He is God.

[1] John xiv. 18–20.
[2] Ibid., 13, 26.
[3] Ibid., xvi. 12–13.
[4] Ibid., xvi. 14–16.

It remained for Saint John to show more explicitly the perfect unity of substance between the Word made Flesh and the Heavenly Father, without other distinction save that which proceeds from the eternal begetting of the Son. For this the Apostle finds occasion in the sublime Prayer uttered by Jesus just before leaving the Supper Room: —

"My Father, the hour is come, glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may glorify Thee." [1]

And the Saviour notes forthwith this Glory He claims is "that which He had had in the bosom of the Father before the world was." In His consciousness of possessing the fulness of the Divine Being, He addresses the Heavenly Father as one equal speaks to another: "All that is Mine is Thine, and all that is Thine is Mine." [2] His almighty powers embrace all humankind, and extend so far as to bestow on whomsoever he sees fit Eternal Life, "which is to know the Father and Jesus."

Just as with their being and acting, so is love their common property: "He that loveth Me will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and there will We make Our abode." [3] Sent by the Father to save the world, He nevertheless has not ceased to be His equal. And so when, His task finished, He demands His wage, He does so in sovereign accents: "Father," He says, "I will." [4] . . . . (What other than a God durst speak in such wise to God?) "Father, I will that where I am these that Thou hast given Me should be also, that they may see the Glory which thou hast given Me, for Thou hast loved Me before the creation of the world." That Glory is His very Godhead, and in the overflowing of His love for us the Christ demands of the Father, as the price of His Sacrifice, that we should enter into some part of that Eternal Brightness. "That Glory . . . I have given them,[5] that they may be one, as

[1] John xvii. 1. [2] Ibid., 5–10. [3] Ibid., xiv. 23.
[4] Θέλω. Ibid., xvii. 24.
[5] By Grace, but most of all by the Eucharist. See *The Christ, the Son of God*, vol. ii. book vi. chap. v. 253.

We are One, and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me and that Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me."[1]

After having displayed Jesus to us performing a divine work in the Eucharist, and associating us in His Glory, by the consummation of His Flesh immolated and His Blood shed for us, John must needs demand of the Cross, — the blood-stained sequel of the Last Supper, — the supreme evidence of the Christ suffering and dying like a God. With this intent he has selected the salient features of his story of the Passion.

No detail is given concerning that cruel Agony, when the Humanity of Jesus succumbs to mortal anguish;[2] the coming of the soldiery alone is related. The Saviour, "knowing all things that should come upon Him,"[3] steps toward them, and with the words "I am He," they recoil and fall to the earth.[4] He surrenders Himself, but as the Master of his enemies, as He is of all events; as a Pontiff, sovereignly disposing the sacrifice of His life whereby He wills to save the world; Priest and Victim

[1] John xvii. 22, 23. "The Word of God means not to ask of the Heavenly Father that the Saints may be one, in essence and in nature, as are the Father and the Son, but that they may be so through the union and transformation of love, even as are the Divine Persons by the unity of Love. Thus, by participation, souls possess the same goods which the Son of God possesses by right of nature; thus they become verily gods, like unto God and His associates. In this sense S. Peter says, "may Grace and Peace increase within you more and more through the knowledge of God and of Our Lord Jesus Christ; as His divine power hath given us all things which appertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us by His own proper Glory and Virtue, and Who, in this manner, hath accomplished within us His great and precious promises, that by these same graces, we may be made partakers of the Divine Nature" (2 Peter i. 2–4). These sayings of the Prince of the Apostles would teach us that the soul shall enter into participation with the very Nature of God, that with Him and in Him it shall co-operate in the work of the Most Holy Trinity, thanks to the substantial union which has been accomplished between it and God. Although these admirable things are not to be accomplished until Eternity, nevertheless, on this earth, when any one arrives at this state of perfection, he already possesses certain striking tokens of that glorious destiny which fill his soul with happiness unutterable." S. John of the Cross, *Explication du Cantique*, strophe xxxix.

[2] Mark xiv. 33, 34. Luke xxii. 43.

[3] John xviii. 4. [4] Ibid., 5, 6.

of this Sacrifice, He takes from His Father's hand the bitter chalice[1] and drains it, His gaze fixed on the prophetic picture drawn by Himself of this His Passion. Now, we know how precisely He had foretold to His Apostles: "Behold we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed to the Chief Priests and the Scribes who shall condemn Him to death: they shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged, and crucified, and the third day He shall rise again."[2]

All happens in the order indicated. The Saviour is brought before the High Pontiffs of Israel, who, stripped of their powers to inflict death, cannot do more than deliver Him over to the Roman Governor.[3] Pilate allows himself to be bullied by a threatening mob into pronouncing the death sentence, but, as he does, he trembles before the mysterious Master of a Kingdom not of this world.[4] Far from lowering Himself, Jesus reminds the cowardly magistrate that he could do naught to his Victim, were it not that the power to treat Him thus had been given him from on High.[5] The same imperial manner manifests itself in all his actions, in the course of His Passion: John depicts Him as a Ruler even when raised on the gibbet, and as a Master ordering the details of His torture. Just as He is about to breathe His last, "Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, in order that still one saying of Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, 'I thirst!'" Some one offers Him to drink the vinegar foretold by the Psalmist. "All is consummated," He says, and bowing His head, "He gives up His Spirit"[6] into the Father's hands, freely, as He had declared: "I lay down My life, but that I may take it again. No man taketh it away from Me; but I lay it down of Myself; I have the power to lay it down and to take it up again; this commandment I have received of My Father."[7]

[1] John xviii. 11. [2] Matt. xx. 17–19. [3] John xviii. 13, 14, 19–24.
[4] Ibid., 36. [5] Ibid., xix. 10, 11. [6] Ibid., 28, 30.
[7] Ibid., x. 17, 18.

"Greater love than this hath no man," Jesus had said, "than that a man lay down his life for his friends."[1] This proof the Saviour furnished, not alone by dying for us, but by giving, as God, such an infinite value to the forfeit, and making of that Sacrifice the Salvation of all mortal kind. With good reason does John regard this office of Redeemer as a new proof of His Divinity. The Crucified Jesus appears to him as the Baptist, his first Master, had described Him: "The Lamb of God that taketh away, that blotteth out, the sins of the world,"[2] the veritable Passover Lamb, whereof "not a bone must be broken." In their turn, Pilate's soldiers, by not breaking the limbs of the holy Victim, observed the prophetic rite,[3] while one of them, piercing with his lance the Saviour's side, caused a gush of water and blood, symbolic of the effects of Redemption, — the water, whereby we are new born in the Life Divine, the Eucharistic Blood, which nourishes it within us.[4]

It remains now for John to complete his design, to bring forth the strongest argument, that without which Saint Paul declares his preaching and the Faith itself were vain,[5] — the Resurrection of the Christ. None could be better qualified to bear witness to it than he, for he had beheld the Divine Risen One; he had talked with Him; he had, with his own hands, touched that glorious Body.[6] Many others, furthermore, had had the same great joy: Peter, Magdalene, the Eleven.[7] And though one of them, being absent at first, remained so incredulous as to force the Saviour, out of His pity for the man's weakness, to place his hands in the nail prints,

[1] John xv. 13. [2] Ibid., i. 29.

[3] When the soldiers were come to Jesus and saw that He was dead, they did not break His legs; . . . and these things were done that the Scripture might be fulfilled: "You shall not break a bone of Him." Exod. xii. 46.

[4] This prodigy, the last of the Passion in S. John's recital, seems to him so important that he refers more than once to the fact that he was an eye-witness of it: "He that saw it hath given testimony; and his testimony is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that you also may believe" (John xix. 35).

[5] 1 Cor. xv. 14. [6] John i. 1. [7] Ibid., xx.

and in the wound in His side, was it not all meant to extort that confession, wherein his stupor and repentance well up? "My Lord and My God!" A cry of Faith, too, which has overcome many an unbeliever since, by finally setting the seal of certitude on the Resurrection, and, therefore, on the Divinity of the Christ. Saint John could not seek a better conclusion to his work. He adds only these words: "Jesus worked many more wonders,[1] which are not written in this Book: these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His Name."

Here ends, in the unanimous opinion of the interpreters, the Fourth Gospel. How comes it, then, that all the manuscripts append to it a recital of still another appearance of Jesus, on the shores of the Sea of Tiberias? The very text of this addition betrays its origin. On seeing John, bearing the burthen of so many years, and showing no sign of an approaching end, the rumor got abroad, in the Christian congregations of Asia, that he was destined not to die, but would await below the Christ's coming on earth, at the end of time, to consummate all in God.[2] A certain saying of Jesus, in the conversation which took place in the course of this Apparition, furnished the foundation for their mistake. The Saviour had just foretold to Peter what manner of death awaited him:—

"And this man," the Apostle had replied, pointing to the dearly beloved disciple, "what shall come to him?"

"Him, so I will have him to remain till I come, what is that to thee?"

"Till I come," does not signify that the Apostle was not to die, but that he should see, before his eyes were closed forever, the return and the presence of Jesus amid His own, manifested in the establishment of the Church.

It behooved him to give this saying of the Saviour its proper meaning, for, as twisted by the Asiatics, it tended

[1] Σημεῖα, literally: "Jesus gave many other signs, other evidences of His Divinity."

[2] John xxi. 23. [3] John xxi. 22.

to make of John a permanent eye-witness of the Christ, His most authoritative interpreter, and consequently the Chief Pastor of Christendom. Now it was to Peter and not to him that this office had been entrusted. John could not tolerate so dangerous an error. To put a stop to it, he adds to his narrative the omitted scene of the Apparition, at which Jesus asks Simon whether he loves Him more than the others. By his humble avowal of that love, Peter effaces his threefold denial, and in recompense receives the supreme charge of providing for the Church: sheep and lambs, the faithful and their pastors.[1] Love, in St. John's eyes, was the greatest proof of the Saviour's Divinity: in Peter he regards it as the source of his Primacy. It is because he loved more than all others that Peter must needs command all.

[1] John xxi. 15–17.

CHAPTER XI.

LAST YEARS AND DEATH OF SAINT JOHN.

Toward the close of the second century, the aged Polycrates had to defend, before Pope Victor, the traditional customs of Asia relative to the date on which they celebrated Easter.[1] He alleged, as his principal authorities, two Apostles, Philip and John. "These great lights," he says, "have shone and were extinguished among us, leaving behind them the living rays which still guide our Churches."

Of Philip, Polycrates mentions only his end. "He was one of the Twelve, and his tomb is at Hierapolis, as well as that of his two daughters, who lived to a ripe old age in Virginity." Saint John's venerable figure, on the contrary, stands out in bold relief in his recollections of the past. He depicts him as occupying, toward the end of the Apostolic era, an eminent position, owing at once to his titles of Apostle, Pontiff, Martyr, and Doctor. Apostle, not merely as was Philip, for, among the Twelve, he was the "dearly beloved" of the Saviour, and in that Upper Room had rested his head on the breast of Jesus. Priest he is, in all the majesty of that office, the veritable Pontiff of the New Law. In token of this superiority the Judaizing Christians of his flock had insisted on his bearing upon his brows, during the ceremonies, that distinctive badge of the sovereign pontificate under the Old Covenant, — the Petalon, a golden plate with these words: "Holiness of Jehovah."[2] Nor was his Martyr's

[1] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, v. 24.

[2] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. 31; v. 24. S. James the Less also wore this token (S. Epiph., *Hæres.*, lxxviii. 4). The holiness of the Bishop of Jerusalem produced such a lasting impression on S. John that, in his

crown one whit less glorious. This was due him most rightfully, since the day when, plunged in the boiling oil, he escaped death only by a miracle, and was thereafter doomed to weary years of captivity in the mines of Patmos.[1] Finally he is the Doctor above all others,[2] hearkened to as if he were the Master Himself, Whose closest confidant he had been, Who had caused him to survive all the rest, to remain the trustworthy echo of His words, the unanswerable witness to His Divinity.

Tradition describes the leaders of the Asiatic churches urging the Apostle to set down his evangelical recollections as an offset to the inventions of Cerinthus. It is quite likely that similar appeals induced him to write his First Epistle; but the end he had in view is not nearly so apparent to the scholar. Did he merely have in mind an introduction to his Gospel, and by this letter accredit it to the churches? Several modern interpreters regard it in this light[3] and adduce in support of this hypothesis the similarities in form and framework of the two writings: the same style; the same sequence of phrases; the same repetition of thoughts according to the rules of parallelism; the same dogmas set forth and expounded: the Divinity of Jesus, His mission as Redeemer, the life everlasting which He came to endow men's souls withal.[4]

outward habit and conduct of life at Ephesus, he made him his pattern (S. Epiph., *Hæres.*, xxx. 24; lxxviii. 13). It is hard to see just why, when it comes to a detail so likely as this, M. Jean Réville should be so shocked: "But as for the transformation of the Apostle John into a priest who wears the plate (the Petalon?), we prefer to let that stand to the account of Polycrates. It simply shows just how much of a legendary personage the Apostle John had become by the end of the second century, and in that very city where he was supposed to have exercised, during many a long year, his Apostleship in Asia" (*Le Quatrième Évangile*, p. 19).

[1] This title μάρτυς given him by Polycrates is at once in remembrance of his tortures at Rome, and of the Saviour's prediction to John as well as to his brother James: "You shall drink of My chalice. . . . " Mark x. 39; Matt. xx. 23.

[2] Eusebius, *loc. cit.*

[3] Hug, *Einleit.*, ii. 243 *sq.* Reithmayr, trad. Valroger, ii. 105, 400–404. Maier, *Einleit.*, p. 430 *sq.* Bisping, *Exeg. Handb.*, viii. 258 *sq.* Cornely, *Introduct. in libr. Nov. Test.*, p. 663.

[4] 1 John i. 1, John i. 1; 1 John i. 4, John xvi. 24; 1 John i. 10, John

These resemblances do indeed establish beyond question that the two works are by the same author, but one cannot infer from them that the Epistle was meant to form but a preface, a foreword to the Gospel. The name and authority of John were amply sufficient to guarantee the work without any necessity of enclosing a letter of recommendation.

Another design would seem to me to be indicated by the polemical turn of the letter, and its exhortations to the practice of the Commandments. Besides Cerinthus and his adepts, who attacked the speculative doctrines of the faith principally, certain odious sectaries were always at work, eager to deduce from these dogmatic errors their moral consequences. Since the Christ, sole God and Son of God according to Cerinthus, had not become incarnate in Jesus, but had had but a fleeting union with Him, it followed that all belief in a Man-God dying on the Cross and thereby expiating our sins, vanished. What was the use, then, of burthening oneself with the lessons of renunciation and self-sacrifice which the latter had given to the world? The Christ is all; it is enough to know Him, to cleave to Him by faith and understanding and we become impeccable, superior and indifferent to the vulgar precepts of virtue.

Long ago Saint Paul had perceived the germs of this corruption in the churches of Asia; before his death, he had charged Timothy to be watchful lest the gangrene spread among his Christian congregations.[1] But, since then, the malady had made very visible progress: during John's absence, dragged far away by Domitian's persecution, first to Rome and then to Patmos, it had become aggravated to such a pitch that the captive Apostle felt forced to interpose his influence with the pastors of Asia. In the Letter to the Seven Churches, we have heard him fulminate like a true "Son of the Thunderbolt," threaten-

viii. 37; 1 John ii. 1, John i. 29; 1 John ii. 5, John xiv. 15; 1 John ii. 7, 8, John xiii. 34; 1 John ii. 24, John xv. 4, 7, 8; 1 John iii. 5, John i. 29; 1 John iii. 16, John xv. 13, etc. Cf. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, vii. 25. S. Jerome, *Ad Galat.*, vi. 10.

[1] 2 Tim. ii. 17. See *The Last Years of Saint Paul*, chap. xii.

ing them with the sword of his word, if they suffered within their fold those unworthy ones who, under color of unveiling to their initiated certain mysterious doctrines, hurled them headlong with themselves into the pit of perdition, "the depths of Satan." Nicolaïtes, votaries of Balaam, or of "Jezebel the Prophetess," all had this trait in common, that of leading men to despise God's commandments, ending always in the worst disorders of the flesh.[1]

The Apostle's impetuous reprimand had checked for a time, this licentious spirit; it had not drained the cesspool, deep down in the souls of these people, still half Jewish or Pagan, whose curiosity had led them to Christianity,[2] but in whom survived, ever living and alert, that threefold concupiscence of fallen humanity: "lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life."[3] This last passion, the most prolific in the fruits of death, had sprouted up, among the leaders, in the form of an overweening spirit, the lust of authority; it bred in them, in any case of withstanding their overbearingness, a supreme contempt for such of the brethren as would not bow before them.

What then had become of their peace and the union of hearts? Were not these great boons in the same perilous state as was their faith in the Divinity of Jesus? The latter dogma Saint John had established on the immovable foundation of his Gospel; he realized the urgent need of reminding them that one must needs not only believe in the Divine Redeemer, but, still more, follow His example, observe His commandments, whereof Charity is the chief. The necessity of inculcating these duties to the Asiatic churches, would seem to me to have been the motive which induced the Apostle to write to them.

This he did with all the freedom of a father, without taking any pains to observe that fine ordering of ideas, which we just now admired in his Gospel. In his letter we find no trace of a plan by which he would treat his subject methodically; consequently, there is no progres-

[1] Apoc. ii. 12–16, 20–24. [2] Ibid., iii. 9. [3] 1 John ii. 16.

sive movement. The thoughts flow along, one suggested by another. John jots them down just as they occur to his mind. Amid sublime teachings, he introduces lively exhortations, and in his anxiety to impress them more profoundly, he repeats them under very many forms.

This lack of any plan, which makes an analysis of the First Epistle well-nigh impracticable, is more than compensated for by the opportunity it affords us of surprising, as it were, the aged Apostle in familiar intercourse with his disciples, and of becoming acquainted with the thoughts which were wont to overflow from his full heart. Any one who has read thus far in this study of Saint John, no matter with how much or little interest, must immediately recognize his accents: "My dearly beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, for God is love. Now in this is manifested God's love for us, that He sent His only Son into the world, that we might live by Him, and that love consists in this, that 't is not we who have loved God, but 't is He that hath first loved us, and sent His Son as the victim of propitiation for our sins. My dearly beloved, if God hath loved us in this wise, we ought also to love one another.[1]"

"God is love." Therein lies everything to Saint John, and from it follow all the rest: the Incarnation, the Redemption, and the outpouring of that greatest of Christian virtues, holy Charity. Israel had been able to gain but feeble glimpses of the Godhead under this aspect. It had received from Jehovah that commandment which Jesus proclaims the first of all: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind, and with thy whole strength;" and that other, like unto the first, which sums up all the Law and the Prophets: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."[2] But when the Eternal spoke thus to Moses, it was from amid thunders and lightning; He appeared to him as the mighty God (*El*), the All-powerful (*El Shaddaï*), the Lord (*Adonaï*), the God of

[1] 1 John iv. 7–11.
[2] Mark xii. 30, 31; Deut. vi. 5; Lev. xix. 18.

Hosts. It belonged to Jesus to reveal God as altogether lovely, lovable as He is love, showing us Himself in His Son, clothed in our flesh, living our mortal life, and still remaining that "Life Eternal which is in the Father," "the Word of Life which was in the Beginning." [1]

"No man hath seen God," [2] said Israel; yet in Jesus, we see Him, without our eyes being dazzled by the brightness of His majesty: the divine speech is made human in Jesus; we listen to it, without any fear (such as filled Israel at the foot of Mount Sinaï), of His thunderbolts,[3] and its very first lesson is that "God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness." [4] To draw nigh unto Him, to attain Him, "to have fellowship with Him," [5] we must "walk in the light" as Jesus did, not content to merely know the truth, but we must "shew it in deed." [6] Yet, how often, proving false to this duty, do we fall back into the darkness! The first step from out the gloom is an acknowledgment on our part of what we are, a confession that we are sinners; then we find in Jesus, the Redeemer, "the Advocate," [7] Who obtains from the Father our forgiveness, and is at the same time, "the victim of propitiation for our sins," [8] a victim Whose blood never ceases to flow for the washing away of our sins. But if, on the contrary, "we say," like the libertines of Asia, "that we are without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." [9] A humble recognition of our falls, only beseeching Jesus to uplift us, is, for us Christians, "to walk in the light," to enter, nay, "to abide in the Father and the Son" [10] in a communion of life and love.

"And behold," continues Saint John, "unto what lengths that love of the Father goeth, even unto willing that we should be called the children of God," [11] He corrects himself at once: "called" but faintly expresses

[1] 1 John i. 1, 2.
[2] Ibid., iv. 12.
[3] Exod. xx. 19; Deut. xviii. 16.
[4] 1 John i. 5.
[5] Ibid., i. 6.
[6] Ποιοῦμεν τὴν ἀλήθειαν. 1 John i. 6. Cf. John iii. 21.
[7] Παράκλητον. 1 John ii. 1.
[8] 1 John ii. 2.
[9] Ibid., i. 7.
[10] Ibid., ii. 24.
[11] Ibid., iii. 1.

it; in reality "we are children of God." "Born of Him, the seed of God abideth in us,"[1] a seed whereof the fruits grow up here below mid the shadows, but shall bloom forth in all their brightness on the day when the Son of God shall manifest Himself unveiled and we shall behold Him as He is in the Holy Trinity, and God, by His mediation being reflected in our souls, "we shall see ourselves like unto Him."[2]

This similitude does not stop at modelling our life on that of Jesus, it teaches that within us resides the Holy Trinity; the Father and the Son accomplishing therein, by the Incarnation and the Redemption, their works of Love; the Holy Ghost finishing it by the unction He outpours upon it, for He it is whom Saint John designates by those words: "Let the Unction,[3] which you have received from the Son of God, abide in you, and you have no need that any man teach you; but as this same Unction teacheth you all things, and is truth itself, free of all falsehood, you have but to abide in that which It teacheth you."[4] Now what that Divine Spirit first inspires in us is love, and to testify to that love, by the practice of the virtues. We have known that love in Jesus: "He hath laid down His life for us, and we," after His example, "we too ought to lay down our lives for our brethren."[5] Carried to this point, to the heights of self-sacrifice and self-forgetfulness, brotherly love raises the soul so far above the allurements which tend to abase it, that it no longer finds in them the occasion of sin.[6] Thus cleansed, it can fearlessly face the judgment seat of God, for "there is no fear in love: perfect love casteth out fear."[7]

This enfranchisement from sin, this serene confidence face to face with the mysteries of eternity; above all, the

[1] 1 John iii. 9.
[2] Ibid., 2.
[3] By this imagery S. John displays the Third Person of the Trinity penetrating through the soul like an oil, a balm poured forth, shedding over it the unction of Grace; grace of light, grace of holiness, grace of love most of all.
[4] 1 John ii. 27.
[5] Ibid., iii. 16.
[6] Ibid., 9; v. 18.
[7] Ibid., iv. 17, 18.

communion, through love, with the most intimate life of God, are such treasures that, to battle with those who would rob his faithful followers of them, John summons up all the strength left in his deepest soul. His letter has in view principally, as has been suggested above, the dissolute Christians, those "children of the Devil,"[1] who use the externals of the faith to mask a hateful libertinage; but he does not forget that the germs of corruption came from those higher up, from those "false prophets,"[2] against whom he had written his Gospel, and whom he calls here by their rightful name of "Antichrists,"[3] since they deny that Jesus is the Christ.[4] "They went out from us," he says, "but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us,"[5] like us they had bowed before that threefold testimony which witnesses that Jesus Christ is at once God and Man: the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood.[6] The Holy Ghost, at the baptism of Jesus in the waters of Jordan, had proclaimed Him Son of God, God even as is His Father; on the other hand, the blood of Jesus shed on Calvary and His death have borne witness that He is as truly man as He is God. These three witnesses — the Spirit, the Water, and the Blood — form but one single testimony, one single voice, affirming that Jesus and the Christ are not, as Cerinthus fabricated, two persons distinct and separable at will, but One Sole Person, having at one and the same time, and indissolubly united, a Divine nature and a human nature.[7]

[1] 1 John iii. 10. [2] Ibid., iv. 1. [3] Ibid., ii. 18.
[4] Ibid., 22. [5] Ibid., 19. [6] Ibid., v. 5–8.

[7] The reading in our Vulgate shows how, in order to mark how intimate and indissoluble is the hypostatic union of the Natures in the Incarnate Word, John assimilates it to that which, in the Holy Trinity, makes of the Three Divine Persons one only and the same God: "There are Three Who give testimony in Heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." It is true we do not find this text in any Greek Manuscript earlier than the eleventh century, or in scarcely any of the Versions. None of the Greek Fathers, prior to the twelfth century, quotes it. The same may be said of the Syrian and Armenian Fathers, and, among the Latin, it is true of SS. Augustine and Jerome. Notwithstanding, the Latin version, in use in the churches of Africa and

By this faith in the Divinity of Jesus, a burning faith, which, seizing his whole soul, his understanding, his heart, devotes him to the Word made Flesh, man is born again to a new life whereof God alone is the source, and whereover neither flesh nor blood has any sway. Now all that which is thus born of God, partaking in part of His almighty powers, as well as of His holiness, draws from this union the glad confidence of triumphing over the world: "And who is he that (thus) overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" [1]

"These things I write you," continues the Apostle, "that you may know that you have eternal life, you who believe in the Name of the Son of God." [2] Sharers by this faith in the Sonship of the Incarnate Word, like Him, we obtain through our prayers all that is in conformity with the Will of our common Father in Heaven.[3] 'T is in Jesus and by Jesus that we are given such portion of the life divine. "He is come, and He hath given us understanding, that we may know the true God and that we may be in His true Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God and Life Eternal." [4]

To this formal declaration of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, worthy conclusion of his letter, John adds but one word: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols!" [5] Idols, that is to say, everything that is not Jesus, anything whereby we risk being separated from Him: to Him alone are due our thoughts, our worship, our love!

No trace appears in this Epistle of any personages or

Spain, contained it, probably from the time of Tertullian and S. Cyprian: it is constantly referred to by all the writers of the Middle Age, and thereafter the Latin Church has always made use of it. On the other hand, this testimony is so important in establishing the dogma of the Trinity, that it is not to be sacrificed lightly. These various motives led the Holy Office to declare in 1897 that the authenticity of this verse cannot *tuto* be called in question. This is a disciplinary decision which commands our entire respect and to which we must needs submit. If the reader would see this question of authenticity amply and prudently treated, let him consult M. Vigouroux's article in *Dictionnaire de la Bible, Épître de S. Jean*, ii. Cf. Alford, *Greek Testament, in loc.*

[1] 1 John v. 1–5. [2] Ibid., 13. [3] Ibid., 14, 15.
[4] Ibid., 20. [5] Ibid., 21.

churches in whose behoof the Apostle destined it particularly. It must be regarded, therefore, as a sort of Encyclical addressed to all the communities of Asia, which, being exposed to the same dangers, had need of the same counsels. Though John, indeed, on his release from Patmos, would seem to have made Ephesus his principal residence, he never failed, at the request of neighboring congregations, to visit them and exercise therein his Apostolic prerogatives. Here, so Clement of Alexandria tells us, he formed from the believers marked out by the Holy Ghost, a chosen body consecrated to the Lord; elsewhere he founded churches and set over them bishops;[1] thus he appointed as first pastor of Smyrna, Polycarp,[2] and of Hierapolis, Papias.[3] When time or strength to undertake such journeyings were wanting to the holy old man, he made up for it by his letters, of which two have come down to us. Though of little weight so far as their subject-matter is concerned, for they hardly do more than repeat what we have just read in his great Epistle, we may well prize them as showing us the form in which the familiar correspondence of the Apostle was carried on.

Saint John, in the first of these missives, salutes the persons to whom he addresses it, in these affectionate terms: "The Aged Man unto the Lady Elect[4] and to her children whom I love in the truth. . . . May God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, grant you grace, mercy, and peace in truth and charity."[5] Should we regard the recipients of this letter as the family of a lady bearing the name of Electa (the chosen), or as a church thus personified, which merited, by the distinguished character of its virtues, the twofold name of Lady and of an elect congregation, chosen in a most especial manner? Many exegetical scholars lean to

[1] Clement of Alexandria, quoted by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, iii. 23).
[2] Tertullian, *De Præscript.*, 32. S. Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus*, 17.
[3] S. Jerome, ibid., 18.
[4] Ὁ πρεσβύτερος ἐκλεκτῇ κυρίᾳ. [5] 2 John 1.

the latter belief, and for weighty reasons.[1] Everything would seem to justify their opinion: the symbolic language, so familiar to Saint John; the contents of the Epistle, which would be much more fittingly addressed to a Christian community than to a private family; finally the greeting with which it concludes: "The children of thy sister, 'the Chosen One (Electa)' salute you."[2] It is scarcely likely that in the same family, two sisters should have had the same name. "Electa, Chosen One," may, therefore, be regarded here, as in the opening words, as a qualification applied to a church where the Apostle then chanced to be, and which, in common with him, sent greetings to the recipients of his letter. His third Epistle leaves no room for similar conjectures, for Saint John addresses it in express terms to one of his Asiatic Christians: "To my dear Gaius, whom I love in the truth."[3]

Both of these documents are mere notes whereby Saint John announces his speedy arrival,[4] and defers to that time the opinions he prefers to express by word of mouth. Despite their brevity, they suffice to give us an idea of the growth of the Apostle's character, in his declining days, for there is no doubt that the two letters date from that period of his life. Indeed, Saint John declares as much by assuming at the beginning the name then gladly accorded him by the faithful, — "the Ancient, the Aged Man," — a title of honor which implies at once the familiarity of children toward their father, together with a feeling of veneration for an old age the most majestic in history, since it reflected all the prestige of the Apostolic Age, and was itself like a bright ray from that Sun which is Jesus.

The trait of character most noteworthy in the first of these letters is the persistence of that impetuous zeal which had caused the Saviour to give John the surname "Son of the Thunderbolt." He exhorts his faithful fol-

[1] Clement of Alexandria, *Adumbr. in* 2 *Joan.* S. Jerome, *Ad. Agerruchiam*, ep. 193, 12. Saint Bede, *In* 2 *Joan.* 13. Card. Hugo, *In* 2 *Joan* 1, etc.

[2] 2 John 13. [3] 3 John 1. [4] 2 John 12; 3 John 14.

lowers, not only to be on their guard against the foes of their faith, "but not to receive them into your house," nor even "to bid them God-speed."[1] By this sternness we recognize the man who long since besought the Divine Master to call down the fire of Heaven upon the Samaritan city which had refused to harbor them.[2]

On the other hand, his letter to Gaius shows how the moderating influences of age, experience, and his love for Jesus, "the meek and lowly of heart," had wrought on this same zeal. John's feelings were personally involved by the incident which forms the subject of this letter. He favored, or at least he tendered a charitable greeting to the missionaries who went from town to town preaching the faith, not to the Christians, who had their own pastors, but to the Gentiles whom they strove to convert. This was, doubtless, an irregular ministry, which would disappear when the hierarchical discipline should attain its complete development; but in those days all that John saw was that there strangers were laboring "for the furtherance of the truth."[3] Thenceforth it was the duty of all to assist them, for, out of respect for the dignity of the Gospel, they wished to accept nothing from the Pagans who were their hearers, leaving it to the believers to provide for their needs.[4]

Gaius had eagerly fulfilled this office of charity; the missionaries had testified before the whole Church to the debt of gratitude they owed him.[5] Another believer, Demetrius by name, had rivalled him in zeal for their welfare.[6] But very different had been the conduct of the head of their church, one Diotrophes. This unworthy pastor, jealous to an excess of his authority and fearing lest these outsiders should minimize it, violated in their respect one of the principal obligations of his charge, that of hospitality. Not only did he refuse to welcome them, he went so far as to drive from the church all such as harbored them.[7] John exhorts his disciple not to fol-

[1] 2 John 10. [2] Luke ix. 54. [3] 3 John 3, 4.
[4] Ibid., 7. [5] Ibid., 6. [6] 3 John 12.
[7] Ibid., 9, 10.

low such an example: let him not be content with being ever ready to give comfort to these ministers of the gospel, but, at their departure, let him take care "to bring them forward on their way and lend them aid on their journeys in a manner worthy of God."[1] As for Diotrophes, the meekness with which John speaks of him is surprising, when one recalls with what vigor, in his Letter to the Seven Churches, he lashes and threatens those bishops who had proven false to their trust.

The head of a Christian congregation which numbered believers as generous as Gaius and Demetrius, certainly merited a severe rebuke; for, not content with straitening the great law of fraternal charity, he took issue against the Apostle himself and harbored evil designs against him. In vain had John written to the church in hopes of allaying the disorders; his letter remained destitute of any effect, and he was reduced to a state of indecision as to whether he could revisit a Christian congregation so bitterly prejudiced. "Diotrophes," he says, "who loveth to have the pre-eminence, does not wish to receive me."[2] And it was he against whom they were wroth! John, the dearly beloved disciple, remembered what his Divine Master would have done on a like occurrence: forgetting his personal grievance, he is content to pen but a few lines concerning the guilty man: "If ever I do come among you, I will advertise what evil he is committing."[3] He closes his Third Epistle with an almost literal repetition of the formula with which he terminates the Second. It is a touching excuse, if only from its simplicity. One feels in it the gentle humor of an old man, more accustomed to talking than to writing, ever a bit suspicious of the tricks played by "ink and paper":[4] "I had many more things to tell thee; but I trust that we shall see each other soon and we can talk at our ease. Peace be with thee. Salute our friends by name."[5]

The scanty traditions which have come down to us

[1] 3 John 5, 6. [2] Ibid., 9. [3] Ibid., 10.
[4] Ibid., 13. [5] Ibid., 14.

concerning the closing years of Saint John's life bear evidence to a happy combination of tenderness and firmness in his character. His aversion to Cerinthus in no wise diminished, if we may believe Saint Irenæus, who recounts the following fact as told him by Saint Polycarp. The holy old man on entering, contrary to his custom, the public baths, learned that the heresiarch was within.

"Let us flee!" he cried, "for fear lest the building fall on us: Cerinthus, the enemy of God and the truth, is here!"[1]

Another trait, preserved by Tertullian and attributed to the Apostle by Saint Jerome, evidences the same vigor in him, when it is a question of making an example even of one of the pastors and maintaining among them, together with a dignity of speech, a fitting respect for the truth. A certain priest of Asia, a great admirer of Saint Paul, conceived the idea that it would be a pious task to attribute to the Apostle a series of romantic adventures which he was supposed to have experienced in company with Thecla, a young girl of Iconia converted by him. Such a fanciful production aroused suspicion, and he was forced to confess its falsity. He excused himself on the ground that he had acted only "out of love for Paul." Indignant at the falsehood, Saint John demanded that he be deposed by the Church.[2]

This hardy action on his part was doubly necessary since the honor of the Church and the uprightness of the priesthood were at stake. When it behooved him to chastise, John recovered all his youthful fire. In the course of his daily life, on the contrary, his only theme was love, evermore preaching love and winning over by his tender and tireless charity those souls he yearned to lead to God. With good reason tradition has treasured up this likeness of him, making it most striking in an incident of great renown in olden days. Clement of

[1] S. Irenæus, *Hæres.*, iii. 3. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. 28. S. Epiphanius (*Hæres.*, xxx. 24), by mistake, substitutes the name of Ebion for that of Cerinthus.

[2] Tertullian, *De Baptismo*, 17. S. Jerome, *De Vir. Illust.*, 7.

Alexandria, who is the first to make mention of it, would seem to have had some doubts as to its authenticity, for he begins by alluding to it as a legend; but, immediately thereafter, referring to his former dictum, he assures his readers that, all things considered, they should rather regard it as a faithful bit of history.[1] Whether authentic or not, it was too highly prized in the earliest centuries of Christianity to be passed over here in silence.

It took place on his return from Patmos, at the time when John, once more established in Ephesus, went about preaching the Good News in the surrounding towns. Meeting a young man of unusual talents, he sowed in his soul the seed of faith, and after confiding him, on his departure, to the Bishop of the place, he called Jesus and his fellow believers to bear witness to this sacred trust. The Bishop fulfilled his charge conscientiously; he received the young neophyte into his dwelling, took due pains to see that he was well brought up, and when he deemed him ripe for the Christian life, conferred baptism on him; then, by the laying on of hands, set upon him "the seal of the Lord." But it was too soon to flatter himself that he was thereby put beyond the reach of danger. Certain loose-lived young men insensibly exercised their influence over him, and made him the companion of their vices, in so far that he soon fell into their froward ways, put himself at their head, and became a robber chieftain.

Long afterwards John returned to the same city. He inquired of the Bishop concerning the young man he had intrusted to his care. The latter, with downcast eyes, replied with tears that he was dead.

"What!" John exclaimed, "how did he die?"

"He is dead to God," replied the Bishop. "A pervert, lost in crimes, he has become leader of a band of brigands whose haunt is in a mountain near by."

At these words the Apostle rent his garments; groaning

[1] Zahn (*Acta Johannis Einleitung*, lii.) considers that it is impossible to deny that there must have been some foundation of historical fact underlying this tale.

and beating his brows, he bade them bring a horse and a guide, and that very hour set forth for the region described to him. When halted by the first outpost of the bandits, he demanded to be taken before their chief. The latter was awaiting him, fully-armed; but, so soon as he recognized the Apostle, overwhelmed with shame, he fled.

The aged saint hastened in pursuit, crying after him: "My son, why flee from me, me, your father, old and unarmed? Have pity on me, my son; fear naught. There is still hope of life and salvation for you. I will answer for you before Jesus Christ. If need be, I will die for you, as Jesus died for all of us; I will give my soul for yours. Stay, believe me, it is the Christ that sendeth me."

The entreaties of the Saint were heard; the young man stopped; not daring to lift his eyes, he threw down his weapons and burst into tears. And as he saw the Apostle approaching him, he fell into his arms, testifying by his sobs that henceforth he meant to live only a life of expiation for his misdeeds. Once more John assured him, under oath, that he should obtain forgiveness of the Saviour, and, in token that he regarded him as already purified by repentance, he fell on his knees before him, and, taking the hand befouled by so many crimes, despite the wretched man's efforts to hide it, he covered it with kisses. Thereafter he conducted him before the assembled brethren that they might be witnesses of his penitence, nor did he abandon him until he had made him steadfast, for once and all, in his return to God.[1]

Clement of Alexandria, of whose narrative the above is but a summary, adds that it was by the aid of long fasts, kept in common with his penitent, that the Apostle confirmed his perseverance. This last feature agrees with that austerity which the ancients attribute to Saint John. According to the account of Saint Epiphanius, who is here their spokesman, he led a manner of life in every way similar to that which had made Saint James the Less so revered by the Jews, as well as by the Christians, of

[1] Clement of Alexandria, *Quis dives salv.*, 42.

the Holy City.[1] If we put trust in his testimony that gracious aspect under which Christian Art commonly depicts the beloved disciple is not the one it behooves us to give him. His features, like those of the sturdy Bishop of Jerusalem, must have been those of an ascetic; over his shoulders flowed the long locks of the Nazarene, which had never known steel; neither oil nor baths refreshed that body worn with fasts; he wore no garment save a tunic and a linen mantle.

Still more authentic is the privilege attributed to Saint John by numerous witnesses, — his virginity. About thirty years after the Apostle's death we find this distinctive characteristic mentioned in a document of Gnostic origin, the (apocryphal) "Acts of John,"[2] but with circumstances so unlikely that it behooves us to discard them. Thrice in this legendary account does the son of Zebedee endeavor to contract marriage; but in vain, for the Saviour dissuades him from it.

"If thou wert not Mine, John, I would allow thee to take unto thyself a wife; but I have need of thee." And yet Jesus can only prevent his doing so by afflicting him with a dangerous sickness.[3]

This farrago of fiction[4] would seem irreconcilable with all that we know of the Apostle; it is to cast a slur on his brave heart to fancy it so helpless before the onslaughts of temptation, that he can only overcome them by escaping them. Tertullian[5] and after him Saint

[1] S. Epiphanius, *Hæres.*, xxx. 24; lxxviii. 13.

[2] This apocryphal story is taken from a collection entitled "*Acts of the Apostles*," the work of an imaginary personage, named Leucius, of whom S. Epiphanius (*Hæres.*, li. 1) would make a disciple of John and whom Photius (*Cod.*, 114) calls Λεύκιος Χαρῖνος. The Gelasian Catalogue abominates these Gnostic romances: "Libri omnes quos fecit Leucius, discipulus diaboli." The few fragments of these *Acts* which we possess, published by Thilo and Tischendorf, have been collected by Zahn in his *Acta Johannis*, pp. 218–250.

[3] This altogether fictitious story is found in the most important fragment of the Acts which we possess (Codex Paris. graec. 520). Tischendorf, *Act. Apocr.*, 272–276.

[4] Another Gnostic writing of the following century, the *Pistis Sophia*, confines itself to doing homage to the Apostle's virginity. "All hail unto thee, John, thou virgin that hast thy throne in the Kingdom of Light." *Pistis Sophia*, ed. Schwartze & Petermann, *in lat.*, Theil, p. 45.

[5] "Johannes Christi spado." Tertullian, *De Monogam.* xvii.

Jerome,[1] have given us a juster idea of his virtue, by ranking him in the number of those chosen souls that are masters of themselves as of the bodies they animate, voluntary victims whom the Saviour calls to a life more angelic than human: "All are not capable of such a measure. . . . There be those that have sacrificed themselves for the kingdom of Heaven's sake. . . . Let them that can understand this saying, understand."[2]

What, according to Tertullian, the Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries admitted as true in these Gnostic romances, was that John was still a virgin when he was called by the Lord; that therefore, like every son of Israel, he had anticipated founding a family, is only what we should expect; but that as soon as Jesus revealed to him the excellence of the spiritual life, the mystical world, whereof he has ever been the type and the Apostle, he consecrated himself to it with that ready ardor which was the distinguishing note of his soul. Never having known any love save that of Jesus, he loved Him with his whole heart, and as a righteous reward he was loved by Him more than was any other. 'T was due to the virgin purity of his love that, like the eagle whose realm is in the heavens and its clouds, he could soar to those heights never attained by eye of man, and glimpse beyond the veil of the Infinite,[3] to it, too, we may ascribe the choice of him by Jesus on the Cross, bequeathing to him His Mother. As it was befitting that the Virgin Mother of God should have a virgin spouse, so also was it fitting that her foster son be a virgin likewise.[4]

Saint John's ministry had been so prolonged and so fruitful that reminiscences of it abound. Unfortunately,

[1] "Talem fuisse eunuchum, quem Jesus amavit plurimum, evangelistam Joannem, ecclesiasticæ tradunt historiæ." S. Jerome, *In Is.* 15.

[2] Matt. xix. 12.

[3] Cassian, *Collat.*, xvi. 14. S. Augustine, *In Joann. tract.* cxxiv. 7. S. Jerome, *In Matt. Præfat.*: *In Is.*, Book xv. chap. lvi. verses 4, 5; *Adver. Jovin.*, i. 26. "Joannes vero noster quasi aquila ad superna volat, et ad ipsum Patrem pervenit dicens: In principio erat Verbum. . . . Exposuit virginitas quod nuptiæ scire non poterant."

[4] S. Epiphanius, *Hæres.*, xxviii. 7. Pseudo-Cesarius, *Dial.*, iii. 177. S. Paulinus of Nole, Ep. li. S. Ambrose, *De inst. Virg.* viii. 50, etc.

they have come down to us so disfigured by the Gnostics that it is well-nigh impossible to separate the true from the false. Take, merely as an example and because of its winning character, the story of the pheasant which the Apostle was fond of petting. A huntsman, finding him engaged in this pastime, marvels that so holy a man could take pleasure in it.

"And thou," the Apostle asks him, "dost thou keep the bow thou hast in thy hand always strung?"

"I unbend it and let it rest," replied the hunter, "so that at the proper time the bowstring may not have lost its springiness, but shoot forth the shaft the more vigorously."

"So is it with our minds," John answered; "if we never relax them, they cannot, in case of necessity, display all their energy."[1]

In the "Acts of John" revised by the Pseudo-Prochorus, we come across a scene evidently founded on the same recollections, although the details and conclusions are different. A pheasant, alighting near John, begins to beat up the dust, and the saintly greybeard looks on with genial interest at its play. A priest passing by is scandalized thereat, saying within himself, "How can such a great personage waste his time watching so trivial a spectacle?"

John read his heart. "My son," he said to him, "far better would it be for thee to amuse thyself with this bird frolicking in the dust than to soil thyself with low and shameful deeds. What have I to do with this pheasant? What I am looking at is your soul."

At these words, the priest, seeing that the Apostle of the Christ had penetrated his conscience, threw himself at his feet, crying out, "Now I behold, O blessed John, that God dwelleth in thee."[2]

What are we to conclude from this diversity of treatment? Simply, it would seem, that the main fact alone is deserving of some credence, namely, that the saintly

[1] Cassian, *Collat.*, xxiv. 21.

[2] *Pseudo-Prochorus* in the *Acta Johannis*, Zahn's ed. p. 190.

old man gladly took part in innocent recreations and, like his Divine Master, loved to draw from them lessons of wisdom.[1]

Always as the groundwork of his preaching, none the less, as we have seen in his Epistles, there remained the love of Jesus, and as the witness to that love, fraternal charity. For him, the practice of the faith reduced itself, more and more to that virtue. Saint Jerome relates that, in the last days of his life, the venerable Apostle, no longer able to walk, was carried into the Church by his disciples. There, incapable of delivering any long discourse, he was content to address that one saying to the faithful, "My little children, love one another!"

Wearied of the ceaseless reiteration, those about him began to complain, "Master, why always say the same thing?"

Whereupon he made this answer most worthy of Saint John:—

"It is the Lord's precept: keep it and it shall be enough."[2]

The work, for which the son of Zebedee had survived his brethren in the Apostleship, was finished. It only remained for the Saviour to keep his promise,[3] to return unto His dearly beloved, and taking him to His heart, as once long since in the Upper Chamber, close his tired eyes. On this point the traditions are unanimous: John's death was as gentle as sleep. Dearly should we like to know its details; but, for this fact, as for the foregoing ones, all that we know has passed through Gnostic hands. It is true, their narration of the last days of the Apostle is one of the rare episodes in the apocryphal Acts which have come down to us intact: hardly more than thirty years elapsed between the death of the aged saint and the composition of the reminiscences which record it: but even this space of time sufficed the forgers for the fabrication of their fancies. The sole truthful incident,[4]

[1] Matt. vi. 26–30; vii. 16–20; xiii. 3–8, 31, 32, etc.
[2] S. Jerome, *In Galat.*, vi. 10.
[3] John xxi. 22.
[4] It was too late, when in the sixth century, under the names of Pro-

which we are justified in regarding as such, is this: that, when forewarned by Jesus of his approaching end, John ordered a grave to be dug, spread his mantle in it, and laid himself down therein.

"Be with me, Lord," he murmured; then, addressing the disciples who, bathed in tears, were standing about him, "Peace be unto you all, my brethren;" whereupon he slumbered in that rest which he wished for them all.[1]

The tomb where the last of the Apostles thus reposed immediately acquired the same renown as that in which were held, at Rome, the venerated remains of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. Of all the glories of Ephesus which Polycrates, one of John's first successors, enumerated to Pope Victor,[2] this was the foremost. And that veneration was not restricted to Asia; it spread throughout Christendom, waxing greater with the ages. At the time of the Council of Ephesus, Pope Celestine, on quoting to the Fathers a saying of Saint John, reminds them that they have before their eyes the relics of the Apostle, and owe him their homage.[3] At the same Council, we hear the Bishops of Syria complain that "though come so great a distance, they cannot venerate as they would the tombs of the holy martyrs, notably that of the thrice-blessed John, the Theologian and Evangelist, who lived on such

chorus and Melito, an attempt was made to expurgate the Gnostic *Acta*. The first of these revisions, attributed to Prochorus, one of the seven Deacons (Acts vi. 5) who was put forward as a disciple of John, has been published in Greek by Professor Zahn, with a remarkable study of the pseudo-Prochorus (*Acta Joannis*, pp. 3–165; iii. lx). His conclusion is that it is a narrative of Syrian origin, for the most part legendary, and composed about the year 500. As for the Pseudo-Melito, the name assumed by the unknown author of this second revision is that of a Bishop of Sardis, a well known and highly revered Asiatic churchman toward the end of the second century (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, v. xxiv. 5). This abridgment of the primitive Acts would seem to have been made in the Church of the West, and for its use. The Latin text is in Migne's *Patrologie Grecque*, v. 1239–1250. See *Dictionary of Christian Biography:* MELITO and PROCHORUS.

[1] These details are contained both in the MSS. of Paris and Vienna, which preserve the fragment of the primitive Acts, as well as in the Syriac and Armenian translations. Zahn, *Acta Joannis*, p. 250.

[2] Polycrates quoted by Eusebius (*Hist Eccl.*, Book V., chap. xxiv).

[3] Mansi, iv. 1286.

intimate terms with the Lord."[1] But though tradition has ever been as steadfast as it is unanimous in this point that John died and had his tomb at Ephesus, the same cannot be said of the legends which had their birth about that sacred monument. Here, again, Gnostic fancies found fertile soil. We find the earliest trace of them in the Acts of John, composed a short time after his death. "The disciples," we read in this apocryphal work, "on returning to the grave on the morrow, found the Apostle there no longer; they discovered only his sandals and the earth boiling up"[2] over the spot where he had laid him down to die.

This tale, in itself so suspicious in every way, was variously elaborated on, in the course of the ages, by popular devotion. Saint Augustine relates that, among the African churches, the common saying was that the Apostle, while awaiting the Lord's coming, reposed in slumber in his grave, and that his breath gently stirred the ground above him.[3] In Syria there was a rumor of a perfume which flowed from this spot, and which pilgrims gathered up;[4] in Gaul, of a manna issuing from his sepulchre, which, when carried afar, worked miracles.[5] All these are but mystical fancies, symbols of all that had been given to the world by the ministrations of the "dearly beloved of Jesus." In these reveries of pious souls over the loved one's grave, the churches of France would seem to have been the most truly prompted; for the manna is for a figure of the Eucharist, supreme pledge of love divine; it proceeds from the tomb of John, because he was its Apostle, and because Love triumphs over Death: "*Fortis ut mors dilectio.*"[6]

[1] Mansi, iv. 1276.

[2] Βρύουσσαν τὴν πηγήν; Zahn conjectures, very reasonably, that instead of πηγὴν we should read γῆν. *Acta Joannis*, p. 250, note l, 23 and Preface, cviii. cix.

[3] S. Augustine, tr. cxxiv. *In Joan*, 2.

[4] Ephrem of Antioch, quoted by Photius. Cod. 229.

[5] Pseudo-Melito, *Liber de Actibus Joannis*, in Migne, *Patrologie Grecque*, v. 1250. Abdias in Fabricius, ii. 586. S. Gregory of Tours, *De Glor. Mart.*, 30. Menology of Basil Porphyrogenetes, iii. 8 May. Metaphrastus in Migne's *Patrologie Grecque*, cxvi. 704 *et seq.* Cf. Combefis, *Auctor Noviss.*, i. 485 *sq.*

[6] Cant. viii. 6.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHURCH AFTER THE DEATH OF SAINT JOHN.

That the last of Jesus' Apostles was laid to rest in the grave must have been not only a cruel blow to the hearts of the disciples who had tended him with such filial affection; it was, furthermore, a temptation against the Faith, for, despite the holy Patriarch's denials, many undoubtedly persisted in believing he would not die before "the Lord's return" and the setting up of His "Kingdom." Always there was that "Kingdom," the fond chimera of the Jews who, in spite of the Christ's words "that it is not of this world," never ceased dreaming of it as triumphant on earth; yet even prejudiced minds might even then have recognized its actual existence in the daily increasing sway of the Glad Tidings over men's souls. The workings of Grace are discoverable in its fruits. Right in the midst of the Pagan world another society was growing up, made up at first of low-born Jews, — fishermen, tax-gatherers, boatmen of Tiberias, without art, without money, whom neither parentage nor education had prepared to combat established teachings, and who, nevertheless, met and vanquished them.

This struggle, then a century old and still going on in our own day, had been wanting in no possible element which could threaten to overwhelm the Cause, — the relentless hatred of their fellow-countrymen, Rome's haughty scorn, the magistrates' harassing acts, Nero's refinement of cruelty, the fear or frenzy of Domitian. Not a hand had been raised in defence of the innovators. "The weapons wherewith we fight," says Saint Paul, "are not those of the flesh."[1] Nay, more, their teaching,

[1] 2 Cor. x. 3, 4.

founded on patience, charity, self-sacrifice, goes directly counter to the innate instincts of every man and are against the most violent passions of our nature. Athwart all the obstacles accumulated by self-interest, human passions, their attachment to the old worship, wherein a pious feeling for their ancestors was intimately associated with the Roman common weal, the Gospel made wondrous progress. The grain of mustard seed has sprung up and with its branches overshadows the world. Already it is that "goodly multitude," whereof Tacitus speaks with less of pity than disdain; and how it has grown since the day when Nero flattered himself that he had swept its vestiges from the earth![1]

Nor was it only in the ranks of the populace, the lowly folk, that it now numbered its followers; we have seen it climbing the Palace steps, crossing its threshold, finding its way first among the officers of lower rank, then rising ever higher, reaching the throne itself in the person of Cæsar's nearest of kin. Three generations have not passed since the Christ was nailed to the gibbet, and already the Church can count more pastors and sanctuaries than any philosophy can boast of teachers and schools. Every city in the East, in Greece, in Italy, possesses some sort of Christian "brotherhood." How were these congregations ruled; what were the hierarchy, the forms of worship, and the state of belief like, toward the close of the first century? Although I have already touched lightly on these questions,[2] it would seem worth while to revert to them now and cast a rapid glance at the general status of the principal Churches.

It was part of God's plan that the Episcopate should only take on certain fixed forms little by little, as the Apostles, one by one vanished from the scene. The leaders set over the various communities were destined to be their successors, and not those chosen by each congregation; for it was fitting that their powers should emanate from an Apostolic, that is to say, a divine source. In the

[1] "Plus afficimur, quotiens metimur," Tertullian.
[2] See *Saint Paul*, vol. i. chap. viii. and vol. ii. chap. xi.

earliest days all that had been needful was the preaching of the missionaries, picked representatives travelling from town to town and sowing the seed of the Glad Tidings; this was the part played by the Twelve and their disciples; but before their demise, they realized the necessity of a stable organization for the Church, now become a permanent society. This evolution is not easy to follow in the contemporary documents. Saint Paul's first epistles mention but two degrees in the functions of the Ministry.[1] His letter to the Philippians[2] and the Acts of the Apostles[3] likewise, speak of "Deacons and Priests," or of "Deacons and Bishops," as if the terms "Priests" and "Bishops" were synonymous. In translating the Apocalypse, however, I have adopted the opinion which holds that the "Angels of the Seven Churches" were really the Bishops of those communities. One thing does indeed remain beyond all question, and that is the fact that from the middle of the second century the existence of the Episcopate, under the forms it had preserved ever since, is established by authentic testimony, at least so far as the larger cities are concerned. Among the Priests there is always one who holds the highest rank, occupies a seat apart in token of his primacy, ordains the other ministers, after the example of the Apostles, and, according to the received rites,[4] in a word, governs the community.

Outside of Jerusalem, which was the first to have a single Pastor in the person of Saint James the Less, we encounter, at this epoch, Bishops at Rome, at Corinth, at Smyrna, in the Pontus, in Crete, and even in far-off Gaul. Many of the Churches still preserve a list of their Pastors and thus refer back, by an unbroken chain, to the Apostle who founded them. Hegesippus, a Christian author,[5]

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 28. Ephes. xiv. 11.

[2] Philip. i. 1.

[3] Acts xiv. 23.

[4] 'T is thus S. Paul ordains Timothy and Titus by the laying on of hands (1 Tim. iv. 14). The latter likewise ordain Priests in the various Churches. (Titus i. 5.)

[5] Hegesippus seems to be of Jewish birth. He went first to Corinth, then to Rome, where he sojourned under the Popes Anicetus, Soter, and Eleutherius. His principal work is the *History of Heresies.*

whose works were collected by Eusebius, has handed down to us many of these precious documents; Saint Irenæus has done the same for Rome; Dionysius of Corinth for Athens; Eusebius for Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem.[1] Nothing in the contemporary writers indicates that this institution, already everywhere in vogue, was regarded as of a novel character. And, nevertheless, it meant nothing less than the transforming of collective powers into an individual authority; one might, therefore, with good reason say that it was a veritable "revolution." Now, if we consider that this "revolution" worked injury to numerous interests, held in high repute and based on traditional possession, and all to the profit of a single magisterium unsanctioned by precedents, who, shall we say, was powerful enough to introduce it, and why has the change left no traces behind it?

Logic, therefore, makes up in a most pertinent fashion, for the silence of certain documents, so far as the Western Churches are concerned.[2] As regards Asia, all attempts to refer to this silence are of no avail to our adversaries, for the authentic[3] Epistles of Saint Ignatius, written in 112–115 to Saint Polycarp and to five Asiatic Churches, — Ephesus, Magnesia, Tralles, Philadelphia, Smyrna, — speak of a regular Hierarchy as already constituted there: the Bishop is over all and in himself concentrates the fraternity over which he has charge. He is the Christ living in its midst: "There where the Bishop is, there is his Church, even as where Jesus Christ is,

[1] Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth in the second century, died about the year 178; he wrote, under Marcus Aurelius, a collection of heretical beliefs. The Greeks honor him as a Martyr.

[2] The allusion is to the arguments some try to draw from the letter of S. Clement of Rome, from Hermas' *Pastor*, from the apocryphal *Second Clementine*, and from the letter of S. Polycarp to the Philippians, which simply speak of them as the "Priests." These objections are ingeniously refuted by Mgr. Duchesne *Les origines chrétiennes* (chap. vi.), who recalls that in the writings of S. Irenæus even Popes are designated by the term "Priests," although their primacy had been long since established.

[3] As to the authenticity of the letters of S. Ignatius and the epistle of S. Polycarp, which bear witness to them, see the very concise dissertation of Mgr. Duchesne. 1er Cahier, *Appendice au chapitre VI.*

there is the Catholic Church."[1] In his hand, Priests and Deacons are "like the strings of a lyre." It would be hard to express more happily the harmony which existed between the members of the fraternities and their leaders. But it is not only among them that this brotherly concord reigns; the term "Catholic Church," which appears here for the first time in Christian literature, indicates to us clearly enough that, even at that date, some strong tie bound together the several Churches in one single body. One such testimony taken in conjunction with the text of the "Letter to the Heads of the Seven Churches," confirms what has been said above[2] of Saint John's ministry, journeying through the country about Ephesus, in order to establish communities there and appointing Bishops over them. How can any one contend that he was the only one to fulfil this function, so pre-eminently appropriate to one of the Apostles? The Apostolic origin of the Episcopate, so far as the greater sees are concerned, supported as it is furthermore by weighty traditions, would therefore seem unquestionable.

As for the ceremonies of the primitive worship, it will be recalled that they have been studied at considerable length in an earlier work in this series,[3] using as groundwork the *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, a venerable document but recently brought to light, although it was known and quoted in the earliest days.[4] It is a veritable handbook of religion, comprising, as a whole, moral precepts for the conduct of life and liturgical directions

[1] S. Ignatius, *Ad Smyrn.*, 8.

[2] See Chapter IX.

[3] *Saint Paul and His Missions*, book i. chap. viii. *Daily Life and Worship in the Primitive Churches.*

[4] The Διδαχὴ τῶν δώδεκα Ἀποστόλων was discovered and published in 1883 by Mgr. Bryennios, Metropolitan of Nicomedia, after a Greek MS. found in the Monastery of Jerusalem of the Most Holy Sepulchre, in the Phanar quarter of Constantinople. It is quoted at the close of the first century in *The Ascension of Isaias*, and was written at Jerusalem, for it recommends the community of goods, which nowhere else has ever been practised. It disappeared in the fourteenth century. Cf. the Abbé Jacquier (Doctoral Thesis, Vitte, Lyons, 1891) who dates it back to the year 60, and Mgr. Batiffol who believes it is still more ancient (*Études d'histoire et de théologie positive*, p. 250). Consult Funk, Zahn, Schaff, etc.

destined for the ordering of the forms of worship. Let us remember, that as the "Good News" hailed from Judea, — "Salvation cometh from the Jews," Jesus said to the Samaritan woman, — in like manner the Christian fraternities, at the outset united with the Synagogue, though afterwards separated from it, certainly preserved the impress of their origin. Consequently it is not at all surprising that their weekly meeting should have been given up to the wonted exercises: readings from the Holy Books, singing of Psalms, the delivering of a homily on some text. Moreover, it was not only in Jerusalem and Syria that these exercises constituted the Christian Liturgy. Saint Justin, who lived about thirty years[1] after Saint John's death, in speaking of Rome, gives us details in perfect accord with the rules laid down in the *Teaching of the Apostles.*

He sets out by saying that, to become a member of the Church, one must receive Baptism, be true to the Christian Faith and promise to observe its moral laws.[2] Baptism, he says, is the true Circumcision, that of the Spirit.[3] By applying to us the merits of the Death of the Christ, it remits our sins: it is a new birth which causes the soul to pass from the darkness and mire of Sin, to a state of holiness and light, a "veritable illumination."[4] By Baptism, the newly converted enter the brotherhood, take part in the religious gatherings, in the exercises of worship, and in the most excellent of all, that which properly constitutes the difference between the ceremonies of the Church and those of the Synagogue, the Eucharist. He beholds the Head of the congregations receive the bread and wine, give thanks to the Father, in the Name of the Son and the Holy Ghost, an act of homage which the people ratify, by responding "Amen," then the Deacons distribute the "Blessed Elements," and carry them to the absent members. None is entitled to par-

[1] S. Justin was converted between 132 and 136; he was martyred under Marcus Aurelius (*Dialog.*, chap. i. § 217).

[2] *Apol.*, i. 61, 93.

[3] *Dialog.*, chap. 43, § 261.

[4] Φωτισμός. *Apol.*, i. 61, 74.

take of this holy food if he is not a believer and has not received the ablution of his sins in Baptism, for this is no longer bread and wine: "even as Jesus Christ," by God's word become incarnate, has taken on Flesh and Blood for our Salvation, so likewise the repast consecrated by the Eucharistic words which the Lord has taught us, and which nourishes our flesh and blood, is the Flesh and Blood of Jesus Incarnate."[1]

It would be impossible to testify in stronger terms to the unity of doctrine and practices between Jerusalem, the Mother Church, and Rome, the new metropolis of the Faith;[2] a unity which goes so far as to use the same language, for, during three centuries, Greek served as the organ of both liturgies.[3] Furthermore, what more explicit testimony could there be to their belief in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, whose essential lineaments we have just now noted, and which was shortly to be perfected in the actual ceremonies of the Mass, by means of certain additions which in no way affect its substance?[4] On the other hand, the importance attached by the *Teaching of the Apostles"* to the part played by the "Prophets" in their gatherings, leads us to note that this rôle decreases in proportion as the Episcopal Hierarchy becomes more firmly established. It will not be forgotten with what prudent reserve Saint Paul endeavored to moderate these spontoneous manifestations, which eluded all surveillance and might easily degenerate into disorder.[5]

[1] *Apol.*, ibid.

[2] On this subject one may profitably compare the *Letter of Pliny to Trajan* (112 A. D.) on the Christian worship of Asia; the Epistles of S. Ignatius on the usages at Antioch; the Gnostic Apocrypha which preserve numerous traditions concerning the ritual, feast days, etc.

[3] When the Roman Liturgy becomes Latin it retains several Greek terms: "Kyrie eleison; agios ischyros; athanatos; Theos" (Office for Good Friday). The most ancient Latin epitaph is that of S. Cornelius (252 A. D.). The first Church to use Latin is that of Africa, to which we owe a Bible in that language, and probably certain parts of the Mass.

[4] It is impossible to infer anything from *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, as to the question of the *Agapë*, so much discussed nowadays. Mgr. Batiffol does not hesitate to assert that this custom never existed. *Études d'histoire et de Théologie positive*, p. 279.

[5] 1 Cor. xiv. 3, etc. Cf. *The Last Years of Saint Paul*, chap. viii.

Little by little they disappeared; no mention at all of them is to be found after Saint Irenæus' day. Like those sudden gleams which flush the skies, and with the sunrise fade away, so those fleeting lights which had illumined the Church's morning vanished when the clear sunlight of the Spirit had fully enlightened it.

This is not the place to study those interesting works suggested by questions concerning the Sacraments in the primitive Church, and especially as regards one of the most necessary, — Penance.[1] I would merely like to remark, that, on this subject as on so many others, the testimony of ecclesiastical writers leaves no doubt that the Roman Church, in communion with the sister Churches of Asia and Africa, had already assumed the ascendency, and that its authority was referred to under circumstances when any point of discipline or belief was at stake. We shall shortly see this tutelary authority invoked as a final court of appeals, at the time of the famous controversy which divides the Churches concerning the celebration of the Pasch.

But still weightier themes were to appeal to the solicitude and thereafter to the supreme intervention of Rome. In order to more thoroughly grasp them, we must needs anticipate somewhat the order of time. Though the persecutions foretold by Jesus remained ever threatening, and overcast the horizon of Christendom, still other storms, also predicted, but far more formidable, were already beating down upon the bark of Peter. This time the whole Faith was imperilled. In many ways it was like a murky mist, which neither the mighty adjurations of Paul in his Epistles, nor the tender mysticism of John could dispel, and which threatened to envelop the entire Orient. To rightly understand the danger, it is necessary to consider in what state the removal of

[1] On Penance in particular consult the Abbé Vacandard, *La Confession Sacramentelle, La Pénitence Publique.* Mgr. Batiffol, *op. cit.* M. l'abbé Boudinhon, apropos of Lea's work in *Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuse*, 1897, M. l'abbé Pelle, *La Pénitence devant la Théologie et l'Histoire.*

the Apostles had left the principal communities founded by them.

Take first Jerusalem, the parent stock and mother of all. It had been the first to possess a single Pastor, a Bishop, in James the Less, whose memory was ever cherished as a monument of righteousness and godliness. We have seen[1] how the little flock of faithful ones, when forced by those outbreaks which preceded the siege to take refuge in Pella, had there chosen as successor of Saint James, Simeon, son of Cleophas, like him one of the "kinsfolk" of Jesus.[2] It was not long before the congregation at Pella divided: some, and many among the Saviour's kindred, going northwards as far as Kokaba, in Batanæa; others, with eyes fixed on that guilty but holy City were bent on returning thither. The Romans, on perceiving that the town was pacified, — in other words deserted,[3] — had in a measure relaxed their watch over its ruins. Further, it was always Mount Moriah, site of the destroyed Temple, which the Tenth Legion had orders to guard, for it was well known that all the hopes of the Jews were centred about this spot. Such was not the case with the Christians. Venerable as the heights of Moriah must appear to every true son of Israel, it was not thitherward that their hearts yearned. Their fondest memories led them to Mount Sion, to the Sanctuary where Jesus had instituted the Eucharist. There was the Upper Chamber, overflowing with that august Mystery; round about it, some few buildings, having escaped the destroyers, were still standing, amid the wreckage of the town, and offered them shelter.[4] Thither it was that Simeon saw fit to lead his flock and gather about him the little group of faithful ones whose souls clung to that ground[5] soaked with the Blood

[1] See Chapter II.

[2] They were called "Δεσπόσυνοι" the kindred, Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, 1, i.; vii., 14.

[3] "*Ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*" Tacitus.

[4] There were to be seen, in particular, seven synagogues more or less intact. Cf. S. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.*, xvi. 4.

[5] Ps. cxviii. 25.

Divine. History tells us no more that is worthy of mention concerning this touching return home. The Church thus restored had a modest existence until Hadrian's time, when new foundations and new troubles occurred to distract the field of death.

Probably Simeon himself did not long remain there, for the fraternities of Batanæa offered a far wider field for his zeal. They have been described already as preserving, under the name of *Nazarenes*, a like fidelity to the Law and the Gospel, but often too conceited not to be susceptible to error. Though the first Fathers, Hegesippus and Julius Africanus always speak of them in terms of esteem, the time is not far distant when we shall find Saint Irenæus outspoken against them, reproaching them with having altered, and transgressed the Gospel teachings, in his indignation mingling in a common anathema the names of Ebionites and Nazarenes. No task is more difficult than an attempt to discern just what differences distinguished them. Over beyond Jordan, there was a swarm of sects, not, like the Schools of Jabneh or of Lydda, occupied in a dry study of the Law, but altogether absorbed in those mystical dreams which were destined later on to give birth to the Cabala. We have already had a glimpse of the Essenes,[1] that "strange people among whom no child was ever born," and which died out a short while after the destruction of Jerusalem, at least in its primitive form. But it left behind it certain traditions resuscitated by the Ebionites[2] who mingled with them their own wildest fancies. Hegesippus who enumerates these heresies, reckons seven as the offspring of Judaism; but he mentions, to the honor of the Church of Jerusalem, that at that epoch it still preserved the Faith in its integrity.[3]

The common tendency of all these sects was to seek, in

[1] See the first chapter of *The Christ the Son of God.*

[2] See above, *The Church of Jerusalem in Exile*, chap. ii.

[3] Hegesippus adds that the Church of Jerusalem later on was infected by heresy through a certain Thebutis, vexed by the fact of his inability to obtain the Bishopric. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iv. 22.

never-ending ablutions,[1] the purification of the soul. In this strange crowd one name stands out prominently, that of Elkasaï;[2] who boasted that his baptism was more efficacious than any other, and capable of effacing the worst offences. Some fragments of the book in which he inscribed his phantasies have come down to us; in it we find nothing but a weird mixture of exorcisms, incantations and astrological predictions.[3] His doctrines are revealed to him by an Angel thirty leagues in height, which claims to be the Son of God, and has a companion of the same stature, who is the Holy Ghost. One might well blush to repeat such absurdities; but the East is the land of dreams and these give a fair picture of many a distraught soul. And, indeed, it was more often their hearts than their minds which were led astray by these whimsies. Though many details of their belief were borrowed by the Elkasaïtes from the Essenes, their moral teachings were far from retaining any of the latter's rigorousness. The Book of Elkasaï, though little known in the Greek and Latin Churches, enjoyed a great renown in Asia[4] and perhaps acted as an inspiration to Menander.

This last personage, in the opinion of Saints Irenæus and Epiphanius, ought to be regarded as the father of all the Gnostics,[5] who were then beginning to spring up all over Syria. What are we to understand exactly by Gnosticism, which has played so important a part, begotten a thousand heresies, and corrupted such an array of souls since the earliest days of the Church? It is really no easy matter to form a clear conception of it, from a

[1] *Recognition*, i. 54–60.

[2] Origen, in Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.*, vi. 38). *Philosophoumena*, ix. 4, 13–7; x. 29. S. Epiph. *Hær.*, xix. 1; xxx. 3, 17. Theodoret, *Hær. Fab.*, ii. 7.

[3] Hilgenfeld, *Novum Testament extra canon.*, fasc. III.

[4] These various sects of Oriental Baptists exist to our day in the marsh lands of Bassora, between the Tigris and Euphrates under the name of Sabians (*Sabïn* is the Syriac word which signifies *Baptizers*). Renan, *Les Évangiles*, p. 462. It is likely that here we have the origin of the manifold ablutions in the Mohammedan religion.

[5] S. Irenæus, I, xxiii. 2; xxiv. 1; xxvii. 1. S. Epiph., xxiii. 1; xxiv. 1.

dogmatic standpoint, since there were as many mistaken systems as there were seats of error. Before going into a summary study of them, let us sum up in a few words those features common to the different schools, as regards the conduct of life: they are indifference to the rules of morality; disdain of the Mosaic Law, aversion for marriage, and a denial of the Divine Judgment. Flesh and matter are both evil: but we have merely to scorn them mentally, even while yielding to them in deed. These extravagances are enough to justify the relentless warfare waged against Gnosticism by a Church already in the firm hands of the Episcopacy, by instinct shrinking from all disorderly characters, and whose mission it is to lead mankind in the paths of Salvation.

As for its doctrinal theories one might say that, to a certain degree, it had forestalled Christianity, in this sense, that the state of mind it takes for granted existed before the latter's appearance. We have seen how Saint Paul and Saint John strove against the fomenting, nay the hatching, of heresies. The Apocalypse thunders over the heads of the Nicolaïtes. The Fourth Gospel inveighs against the illusions of Cerinthus. How often did the good seed fall on soil already oversown with cockle! Among the Pagans it was the degenerate metaphysics of Plato, so much more attractive to the Oriental genius than the rigorism of Aristotle; among the Jews, there were the fancies of allegorical exegesis, not to mention the uncouth religions of Chaldea and Persia and Egypt, evermore imported along with their commerce. All these elements were amalgamated with the Nazarean dreams and the doctrinal deposit of Christianity, forming innumerable combinations which defy analysis, but wherein almost always myths are predominant. By diverse ways, whether through mysticism or philosophy, they end in relegating God to an empyrean so lofty that all relations with the universe become impossible to Him. Hence it follows that to explain the formation of the world they are forced to have recourse to "Æons," emanating from God as the first principle; but growing more and more

imperfect, the further they are withdrawn from the fountain-head. Matter, which is their handiwork, must therefore be, from its origin, tainted and vicious. Hence flow all the consequences which have been stated above, and which tend to do away with all morality, under color of purifying it.

Such, in its broad outlines, is a sketch of Gnosis.[1] There can be no question here of going into the endless details concerning the sects sprung from it, nor of the pernicious vagaries they fathered: on the other hand, it is to our purpose to know the principal seats of the first great Heresy which attacked the cradle of the Church. These were Antioch and Alexandria. I have already mentioned Menander to whom many of the Fathers ascribed the paternity of all Gnosticism. It may be that this is to magnify beyond measure the part played by a personage known to us solely by their refutations. He would seem to have resided for a long time in Antioch, although he was a native of Samaria, like his master, Simon the Magician, whom we saw withstanding Saint Peter.[2] Simon, in his impiety, had gone so far as to bid his disciples worship him in company with a woman named Helen, whom he called "his first thought."[3] Menander revived all his pretensions, boasting of still higher revelations, which he supported by deceitful spells of magic, and even dared to baptize in his own name, without invoking that of the Christ. Another Samaritan, Dositheus, a disciple of theirs, announced that he was the great Prophet foretold by Moses. If to these names we add that of Saturninus who likewise taught in Antioch, according to Saint Irenæus we shall have become acquainted with the most dangerous artificers of error in Syria, at the time we are now concerned with. All founded their theological aberrations on the legions of Angels,

[1] The terms "Gnosis" and "Gnosticism" are employed almost indifferently to designate the whole body of mythical errors, which played so great a part in that epoch. The word "γνῶσις," knowledge, is employed by S. Paul in a sense not at all favorable. 1 Tim. vi. 20.

[2] Acts viii. 9–25.

[3] S. Justin, *Apol.*, i. 26, 56. S. Irenæus, i. 23. *Philosophoumena*, vi.

already endlessly multiplied by the Essenes. Among these fantastic beings, though at their head be it said, they set a Jesus more or less real, who with them serves as an intermediary between the world and the inaccessible Divinity.

These daring conceits do really testify, even by their extravagance, to a faith in the mystery of the Incarnation, without which no man ever would have dreamed of saying he was God. Though combated at Antioch and Smyrna with equal authority and vigor by bishops like Ignatius[1] and Polycarp, the spiritual sons of Saint John, whose virtues won for them the crown of Martyrdom, they nevertheless pushed their propaganda beyond the boundaries of Asia, and in the Alexandrian School found a soil better fitted for their full flowering than any other in the world.

Egypt is said to have been evangelized by Saint Mark,[2] but this tradition is contested. It is certain that, as the Alexandrian Philo relates,[3] it possessed, for many a year, communities of "Therapeutæ,"[4] living on the shores of Lake Mareotis, and leading an austere life quite similar to that of the old Essenes. Were these Jews converted by the preaching of the Gospel and raised to the practice of the higher Christian virtues? Many of the Fathers believed so;[5] but as the Therapeutæ bound themselves down to many observances purely Jewish in character, notably their frequent ablutions, the contrary opinion generally prevails. The same may be said of the poems styled "Sybilline" which then were so plentiful in that country, as a sort of oracles, wherein magnificent prayers were mingled with threatening prophecies concerning the last days. Are we to believe that in the Fourth Book

[1] S. Ignatius, *Philadelp.*, vii. *Ephes.*, ix. *Trall.*, ix., x. *Magn.*, viii.

[2] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, ii. 16. S. Epiph. *Hær.*, li. 6. S. Jerome, *De Vir. Ill.*, 8.

[3] Philo was a Jewish philosopher, born at Alexandria in 30 B. C. Although he lived to be a very old man, he must have been dead before the probable time of S. Mark's preaching there.

[4] Θεραπευτής, "servant" of God.

[5] For the references, see note 2.

especially, in which a Christian spirit is so often recognizable, the handiwork of some disciple of Jesus is before us? It is a question; but certainly there is nothing extravagant in concluding therefrom that the Gospel had penetrated into these regions by the latter part of the first century; that it had made its influence felt there; consequently, that the list of successors of Saint Mark given by tradition — Annianus, Avilius, Cerdo, Primus[1] — is not devoid of a certain authenticity. The Christian communities of Egypt display from the outset a spirit most contrary to that of Judaism. This opposition appears notably in a work entitled "The Epistle of Barnabas," wherein the separation of the Church and the Synagogue is clearly indicated. The way is open to Christian Gnosticism, which was to find in Alexandria a fertile field.

Three names condense its history as well as represent its essential teaching, — Basilides,[2] Valentinus, and Carpocrates. Basilides, born in Syria, where he would seem to have been under the influence of Menander, professes, at least in his private instructions, a doleful system of metaphysics which foreshadows, in more than one feature, the scepticism of the Kantian School. Everything in the Universe is a perpetual growth, an evolution whereby the material world tends to transform itself little by little into an ideal world. The perfect flowering of it all is consummated in the person of Jesus, in a fashion so complete that in Him was left nothing which Death could claim its own. The Gospel He gave to the world is the "Glad Tidings," the announcement of this progress in which, by following His example, every man can become a partaker, and which results in every creature becoming lost in God. Basilides quotes the Gospels faithfully, and it is proper to note that he refers to that of Saint John as of the same weight as the three others. Later on he endeavors to make a commentary on them in order to

[1] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, ii. 24; iii. 14, 21; iv. 1, 4. *Constit. Apost.*, vii. 46.

[2] Cf. S. Irenæus, i. 26. *Philosophoumena*, vii. Clement of Alexandria. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iv. 7. *Acta Archelai*, in Migne, *Patr. Gr.*, x. 1523.

use them to uphold his system of manifold "Filiations," whereby he explained the genesis of the world.

Valentinus,[1] according to Saint Epiphanius, was a native of Egypt, was educated at Alexandria, and, after having resided at Cyprus, intrigued vainly for the bishopric. At first he insinuated his doctrines secretly, before breaking openly with the Church. Basilides' system, very obscure and complicated as it is, would seem a marvel of clearness when compared with the Valentinian phantasies. And yet one can note a common basework of scepticism and an analogous conception of the Supreme Being, — "The Great Depths," by degrees declining from its Perfection down to the material creature, whereof it becomes the Father. To the Christ is attributed the same mission of regenerating, spiritualizing this inferior element, and bringing it back to God. Lost in their metaphysics, Basilides, Valentinus, and their adepts accorded as little attention as they did importance to the rules of morality. They were secondary considerations in the eyes of these men absorbed in infinite visions. From morality neglected to morality destroyed is an easy step. Many came to regard as indifferent for the "Illuminati," the true Gnostics, all, even the most guilty, outward acts. Always, after this fashion, human dogmas perish.

What his masters had merely tolerated was reserved to Carpocrates[2] and his son Epiphanius to build up into a system. Both seemed to have purposed casting some light on their Theogony and of harmonizing it with the Greek fables; but what most remains of their teaching is that they made iniquity a means of salvation. The reason of this is that in order to arrive at the eternal blessedness — in other words, to liberate oneself from the tyranny of the creative powers — one must have passed through the whole cycle of actions possible, crimes included. That so monstrous a doctrine should have been taught openly by a teacher of renown in a city like Alex-

[1] S. Epiph. *Hær.*, 31.

[2] S. Irenæus, i. 25; ii. 31, 32. *Philosoph.*, vii. 20. Tertullian, *De Animâ*, 23–35. Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.*, iii. 2.

andria, which plumed itself on continuing, if not of infusing new life into, the pure Platonic speculations, and to an ambition so high joined that of presenting, in its "Therapeutæ," a model rivalling the cenobitic in virtues, one may well be amazed at the spectacle; but what is even more astonishing is that a woman was one of its chief interpreters, and that in Rome itself. Saint Irenæus tells us that Marcellina won great fame by her preaching of such infamous doctrines.[1] There is no doubt but that the majority of the calumnies which defamed Christianity, by connecting it with stories of secret attacks, and by its libels went far to justify its persecutors, issued from this impure source.

It would be unfair, however, to judge all Alexandrian Gnosis by these weaknesses. Basilides, Valentinus, Carpocrates himself, were men of distinguished and brilliant minds. Though they too often are led astray by Utopian follies, though they lower themselves, whether by logic or by weakness, to the very depths of degradation, they none the less give evidence, in many of their conceptions, of a depth and power which is surprising when set side by side with such chimeras. Egypt, that bore them, cherished both their influence and its esteem for them. The Fathers must needs reckon with them in their philosophical works and highly too. Clement of Alexandria speaks of them with the greatest respect; he quotes one of their disciples, Heracleon,[2] as one of the authorities. He and Origen take from them all which seemed compatible with the teaching of the Christian Church. Under their influence the city of Alexandria became one of the most brilliant centres of theology.

But however great the renown of any provincial town, Rome, nevertheless, preserved its primacy which shone

[1] "Marcellina quæ Romam, sub Amicto venit, cum esset hujus doctrinæ, multos exterminavit." S. Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, i. 25, 26. Cf. Mgr. Duchesne, p. 161.

[2] Heracleon, Valentinus' disciple, lived in the second century. He wrote commentaries on SS. Luke and John, afterward collected by Origen. Cf. S. Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.*, iv. 4. *Strom.*, iv. chap. iv. 26. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, v. x. 1.

over the world and attracted to it the brightest minds. From all quarters men flocked to the "Sacred City;"[1] believers, to refresh their Faith at the tombs of the Martyrs; the hesitating, to seek there the Arbiter who should strengthen their convictions, and the light which should dissipate their doubts; the heretics, finally, to gain credit for their errors, by exhibiting them in a lustre borrowed from it. We have just seen how the revolting excesses of Carpocrates were preached in Rome by a woman. Gnosticism had a worthier representative there in one of its principal upholders, Valentinus, who had belonged to the Church, but brought about his own expulsion. Among all analogous errors his was nearest the truth. In many points it was in touch with Christianity. Heracleon and Ptolemy, his principal disciples, carried on at Rome the teaching of his doctrines, and added to them commentaries on our Holy Books, for a mania for writing was one of the peculiar characteristics of that sect.[2]

The immorality of most of the Gnostics won for them well-merited contempt. Still more dangerous was the heresy inaugurated by Cerdo, later on revived and developed by Marcion, who wore the mask of modesty. Both, natives of Asia,[3] had gone to Rome, under pretence of getting the stamp of the Church's approval for their vagaries, and were repudiated. They agreed in preaching a dualism in the Godhead, and in declaring the Old and New Testaments irreconcilable whereof they eliminated several books. As Jesus had but an apparent body, His Incarnation, His life and death no longer present any reality either; hence the name of "Docetism,"[4] by which this heresy is known. Its austere outwardly appearance

[1] "Civitas sacrosancta." Apuleius, *Metam.*, xi. 26.

[2] Nevertheless all that has come down to us from Valentinus is one book, the *Pistis* or *Piste Sophia, The Faithful Wisdom*, which consists in interrogations of Jesus by Mary. *Schwartze.* Ed. Petermann, Berlin, 1851.

[3] Cerdo was from Syria; Marcion from Sinope. As to Docetism, cf. S. Irenæus, i. 27; iii. 4. S. Hippolytus, *Pseudo-Tertullian*, 50. *Epiph.*, 41. *Philastr.*, 44, 45. S. Justin, *Apol.*, i. 26, 58. *Philosoph.*, vii. 29, 31; x. 19. Tertullian, *Contr. Marc.*

[4] Δοκέω, "to appear."

made it the more pernicious. Furthermore, it affected a clearness as much as the Gnostics did a misty depth of utterance; accordingly, it had so many followers that it could divide them in groups, which organized under a Hierarchy, after the model of Christianity.[1]

Here let us finish our list of these errors. Each in its own way all the visionary concoctors of new Faiths served, in turn, the Cause of the Christ by coming to dash themselves to pieces against that "Corner-stone" whereon He had built. "For there must be also heresies,"[2] the Apostle has said in His name; they had flung themselves upon Rome in such numbers, so subtile, so perverse, but only the better to testify to the steadfastness of the edifice capable of staying their mad assaults. They came hither, I have said, less to shake its foundations than to add to their lustre. In all this confusion of sects which boasted of being Christian, God never failed His work in the hour of need. "He well knew how to preserve in it a character of authority whereof the heresies could not rob it."[3] "This Church of Rome, the most ancient,"[4] toward which all eyes turned as to a brilliant lighthouse, was of a mould fitted to withstand all shocks, and already in a position to enforce everywhere its belief together with its discipline. Those that withdrew from it, after first having recognized it, never could efface the mark of their novelty, neither of their rebellion. The lofty speculations, not to say the dreams, which always had been the reef on which the Oriental imaginations foundered, had proved of no danger to it. Imbued with that old Roman spirit, a mixture of strength and suppleness which had conquered the world, well aware that, for the weak, all power consists in remaining united, its first care was to establish its mastership. The

[1] It is interesting to note that Docetism is still extant in the East. The Church of Deïr-Ali, to the south of Damascus, still adheres to Marcionism.

[2] "*Oportet et hæreses esse.*" 1 Cor. 11, 19.

[3] Bossuet, *Histoire universelle*, 2d part.

[4] Εὐξάμανος τήν ἀργαιοτάτην Ῥωμαίων ἐκκλησίαν ἰδεῖν. Origen, quoted by Eusebius (*Hist. Eccl.* vi. xiv. 10).

widely dispersed Christian communities it bound up together by ties of dependency and fraternity until it made them into a fasces so solid that no strength could break it; to it belonged the duty of constituting the body, essentially hierarchical, the great school of respect and of authority, which is of all others Catholicism, the work of a hand Divine if ever any was.[1]

The Episcopate, already robust, quite as opposed to any extravagances, whether in looseness or in piety, less anxious about vain analysis than to maintain, in the unity of Faith and morality, the flock intrusted to it, became its strength as well as its salvation amid the flood of errors which encompassed it. Then by a just balancing of jurisdiction and action, the Episcopate is in its turn maintained in the closest union by the Bishop of Rome set over it as its Head, established from on High as judge and arbiter beyond appeal, in all disagreements. The Popes Anicetus, and Soter, his successor, beheld the entire movement of Christendom centre about themselves. The Symbols of belief, which were beginning to come into use at Rome, became a law to every Christian congregation for that sole reason. Irenæus, who, through Polycarp, his master, was in touch with Saint John, "who had seen the Christ," deems it quite sufficient to confound any heresy, if he quotes the Roman Faith, the doctrines of that Mother Church, "the greatest, the oldest, the most illustrious, which possesses, through an unbroken succession, the true tradition of Peter and Paul; unto which, because of its Primacy,[2] every other ought to have recourse." The correspondence between Christian congregations, inaugurated by the letters of the two great Apostles, thereafter continued by Pope Saint Clement, becomes a custom and at the same time a new tie. These circular letters are read in the Sunday meetings, and form, as it were, a prolongation of the Apostolic writings.[3]

Against this perfect accord between the head and its

[1] Θεοῦ φυτεία ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία. *Constit. Apost.*, i. 1.
[2] *Propter potiorem principalitatem.* S. Irenæus, iii. 111, 2.
[3] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, v. xxv.

members, this concert of wisdom, piety, goodness inspired by the everlasting promises, what heresy could make any headway? Gnosticism, which at first seemed so threatening, unable to take root in a soil devoid of consistency, began to wither and decay. Other errors followed which had a like fortune; then others still. Even to-day the list is not closed of turbulent and restless spirits which deem themselves wiser than the Church, and seek to substitute their opinions for her teachings; but in her old age the Church is not exhausted, neither her voice nor her heart are worn out. Better than oracle, more than queen, she is always Mother; her sternness is all made of tenderness. When she raises her hand, is it to strike. or is it to bless? Even when she condemns, she does it out of love, for, since it is her mission to lead men to salvation, what better proof of love could she give than to keep them in the path that leads thereto? To the innovators who would murder her, her arms are stretched forth; she urges them to fling themselves in her embrace. Full of the Spirit of Him Who said, "I will draw all things unto Me,"[1] she invokes Him in their behalf and repeats with Him, "Holy Father, I commend unto Thee them that Thou hast given Me: that they may be one as We; that they may be one in Us." It is the Prayer of Jesus Christ in Saint John.[2] Heaven and earth shall pass away but not those words.[3]

[1] John xiii. 32. [2] Ibid., xxvii. 11. [3] Matt. xxiv. 35.

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The Tablet (London, Feb. 14, 1891).

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of Christ, which is up to the level of modern research, and yet is written in a spirit of reverence and Catholic faith. . . . It will be seen that a careful reading of the translation has not led to the discovery of anything of great moment, and it is quite likely that even where we have expressed our preferences, the reader may not be in sympathy with us, but with the translator. In any case we do not forget the numerous instances in which the translator has been very happy in rendering difficult and idiomatic passages, and we congratulate him on it. May the devout and learned study of our Lord's Life, which he has brought within the reach of millions of new readers, spread the knowledge of Christ in minds, deepen faith in Him and love for Him in hearts. Meditation on that life and those words—contemplation of the living Christ and devout application of His words to ourselves—has ever been the Catholic practice; meditation is a daily office of devout souls. It would become, we venture to think, a delightful exercise of the minds and hearts of countless others, if they helped themselves by means of the light thrown on the Gospels by such a book as this.

The Ave Maria (March, 1891).

We cannot, therefore, too highly commend these volumes to our readers. The translation has been skillfully done, and reflects the many gifts of mind and heart possessed by the one to whom the task was entrusted. The mention of the publishers is a sufficient guarantee for the mechanical execution of the book.

Catholic Standard.

This learned work is not merely a biography, it is a veritable history as well. The whole period is rehabilitated, the people made to appear before us as they actually lived. Geography, topography, ethnology, and politics are here combined to form a picture *instinct with living reality.* We do not think that we are saying too much when we declare that this work should at once find a place in every Christian library.

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The Tablet (London).

Naturally, the great chiefs of the infidel camp are not included in the Abbé Fouard's long list of authorities. . . . But he has made honorable mention of several Protestant writers who have, in a different spirit, devoted themselves laudably to magnifying the name and history of Christ according to their lights. Such are Messrs. Westcott, Geikie, Farrar, Lange, Caspari, Pressensé, Wordsworth, and Trench. As to Catholic writers on the Gospel history, they are without number; but it would be difficult to point out any merit possessed by these divines, scattered throughout all the lands and ages of Christendom, which are not fairly represented and in a manner summed up in this most valuable, carefully written, and comprehensive *vie de Jésus* ["THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD"]. It is thoroughly worthy of a scholar. Things are not taken at second hand, but the original sources referred to in the foot-notes. . . . The charm of novelty is as far as possible given to what is very old. . . . A principle of selection operates in every paragraph and sentence, and the effect produced is remarkably happy. Needless matter is eliminated; and the chaff being winnowed, the pure grain alone is kept in store. To the student of the Greek Testament the work will be peculiarly valuable, since the writer never fails to point out any difficulty or singularity that there may be in the original.

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Saint Peter's ministry at Rome is a well-nigh unknown factor to most students of history. But Monsieur Fouard knows where to look in his treasure-house of historical lore for facts and indices, wherewith to make up for the silence of sacred writers ; and thus with him we follow (so to say) the great Missionary, step by step. . . . All the praise we might lavish on this important work would add nothing to the great reputation already won for the learned and devout writer by his Life of Jesus. We have but one word to add to what we have said above, to wit, that *Saint Peter* is in no wise inferior to his earlier work.

Le Bien-Public (of Belgium).

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Nouvelliste de Rouen.

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PAUL ALLARD.

The Dublin Review.

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The Tablet (London).

Certain pages of the New Testament have a freshness of meaning for us when we have made the acquaintance of the motley crowd that in St. Peter's day thronged round the shops of the wealthy merchants in the Campus Martius, or have chatted with the man of letters as he took his daily walk in the Via Sacra, or mingled with the rag-pickers of the Suburra. We have lately had before us many learned critical works by Catholics and Protestants on the Sacred Scriptures. There has been at times a tendency to underrate Catholic laborers in this respect. It is well to stimulate Catholic activity in this as in other matters. But up to this moment we doubt if we have come across a volume which, in the same compass, conveys with equal facility so great an amount of illustrative matter. In a word Abbé Fouard's work in our opinion ranks among the most brilliant and solid productions of Biblical literature in our day.

American Catholic Quarterly Review.

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Catholic World (New York).

Fouard certainly tells us what we knew before, but never so distinctly and in such fulness as now. Peter and the other Apostles seem to stand before us as living men. . . . Abbé Fouard's book will help to make the truth known.

We cannot but acknowledge our great indebtedness to Mr. Griffith for putting this great work within the reach of English readers. His former translation of Fouard's Life of Christ has already been noticed at considerable length in these pages, and we are pleased to record its hearty reception by the reading public. We sincerely hope that this companion volume will meet with an even warmer welcome.

Sun (New York).

There are other chapters of this book which the reader will find stored with information drawn at first hand from the original authority. We have probably, however, already given a sufficiently clear idea of the contents of the volume to indicate its substantial value and the literary skill which not even the translation from the author's native language into English is able to disguise.

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This History of St. Peter will be found absorbingly interesting. The book is not brief, but no one who begins it will weary until the end is reached, and every one will regret that it is not longer.

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F. N., Licencié ès lettres.

Revue de Normandie.

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THE ABBÉ SAUVAGE.

Université Catholique.

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[The Last Years of Saint Paul.]

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Saint John and the close of
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